無限の住人

HIROAKI SAMURA

BLADE OF THE IMMORTAL

On Silent Wings II

BLADE OF THE IMMORTAL

On Silent Wings II

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BLADE OF THE IMMORTAL

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translation
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lettering and retouch
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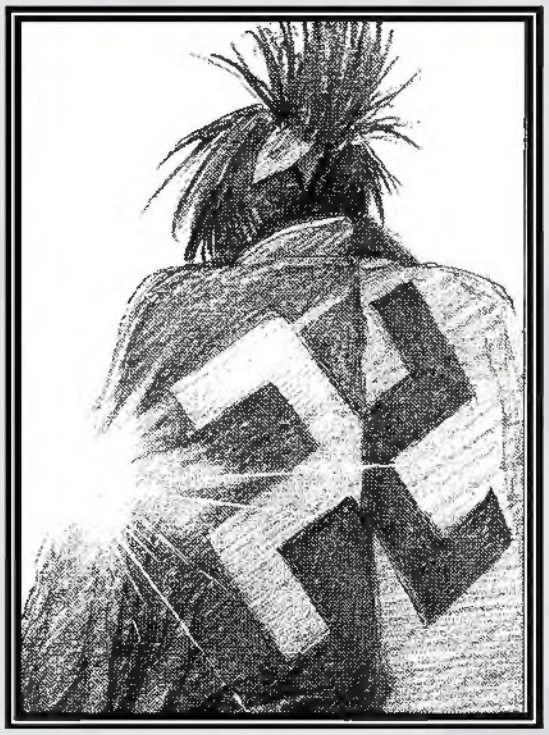
On Silent Wings II

DARK HORSE MANGA™

ABOUT THE TRANSLATION



The Swastika

The main character in *Blade of the Immortal*, Manji, has taken the "crux gammata" as both his name and his personal symbol. This symbol is also known as the *swastika*, a name derived from the Sanskrit *svastika* (meaning "welfare," from *su*—"well"+ *asti*—"he is"). As a symbol of prosperity and good fortune, the swastika was widely used throughout the ancient world (for example, appearing often on Mesopotamian coinage), including North and South America, and has been used in Japan as a symbol of Buddhism since ancient times. To be precise, the symbol generally used by Japanese Buddhists is the *sauvastika*, which moves in a counterclockwise direction and is called the *manji* in Japanese. The arms of the swastika, which point in a clockwise direction, are generally considered a solar symbol. It was this version (the *hakenkreuz*) that was perverted by the Nazis. The sauvastika generally stands for night, and often for magical practices. It is important that readers understand that the swastika has ancient and honorable origins, and it is those that apply to this story, which takes place in the 18th century [ca. 1782–83]. *There is no anti-Semitic or pro-Nazi meaning behind the use of the symbol in this story. Those meanings did not exist until after 1910.*

The Artwork

The creator of *Blade of the Immortal* requested that we make an effort to avoid mirror-imaging his artwork. Normally, Westernized manga are first copied in a mirror image in order to facilitate the left-to-right reading of the pages. However, Mr. Samura decided that he would rather see his pages reversed via the technique of cutting up the panels and re-pasting them in reverse order. While we feel that this often leads to problems in panel-to-panel continuity, we place primary importance on the wishes of the creator. Therefore, most of *Blade of the Immortal* has been produced using the "cut and paste" technique. There are, of course, some sequences where it was impossible to do this, and mirror-imaged panels or pages were used.

The Sound Effects & Dialogue

Since some of Mr. Samura's sound effects are integral parts of the illustrations, we decided to leave those in their original Japanese. We hope readers will view the unretouched sound effects as essential portions of Mr. Samura's extraordinary artwork. In addition, Mr. Samura's treatment of dialogue is quite different from that featured in typical samurai manga and is considered to be one of the features that has made *Blade* such a hit in Japan. Mr. Samura has mixed a variety of linguistic styles in this fantasy story, with some characters speaking in the mannered style of old Japan while others speak as if they were street-corner punks from a bad area of modern-day Tokyo. The anachronistic slang used by some of the characters in the English translation reflects the unusual mix of speech patterns from the original Japanese text.

ON SILENT WINGS
Part 3

SEE, RIN...?

WOULD YOU LIKE IT?

OH, *YEAH!*

MOM AND DAD SURE ARE *SLOW*, HUH?

THEY MUST BE HAVING TROUBLE BUYING THAT *HAMAYUMI*.

IT'S THE CROWD.

YOU MIND BEING WITH ME A LITTLE LONGER, RIN?

AW, I LIKE YOU BEST OF ALL, GRAND-PA!

WHEN I GO TO THE TOHO TEMPLE... YOU KNOW, LIKE, WHEN I TRY TO GET *BEKKŌ-AME*, YOU KNOW WHAT?

DAD SAYS I SHOULDN'T BUY SWEET STUFF ALL THE TIME!

BUT YOU NEVER EVER SAY NO, GRAND-PA!

IF YOU WANT SOMETHING, JUST ASK, CHILD.

HEE HEE... LUCKY!

IS IT GOOD ...?

MM! NICE AN' SWEET!

BRRR!

IT'S GETTING KINDA COLD, HUH, GRANDPA?

IT'S THE EVENING BREEZE.

YEAH! LOOK!

IT MAKES MY PINWHEEL SPIN REAL GOOD, HUH?

THAT IT DOES, MY DEAR!

"SO LONG AS THE WINDS...

"...STIR THE WAVES OF MY HEART..."

HUH?

IT'S NOTHING, RIN.

I WAS JUST REMEMBERING SOMETHING A FRIEND OF MINE ONCE SAID.

"THE WINGS OF HATE WILL NEVER STOP BEATING."

"SO LONG AS THE WINDS STIR THE WAVES OF MY HEART...

WHAT'S IT MEAN?

ONE OF YOUR FRIENDS SAID THAT?

HE WAS DRIVEN DEEP INTO THE SHADOWS...

BUT THERE WAS AN INCIDENT, AND HE WAS EXPELLED. IT WAS A TRAGEDY.

HE USED TO BELONG TO OUR SAME *MON*.

RIN...?

...IT WAS PARTLY BECAUSE OF MY OWN INADEQUATE SWORD WORK...

OF COURSE...

BEFORE TAKAYOSHI... BEFORE YOUR FATHER GETS BACK...

...THERE'S SOMETHING I WANTED TO SAY TO YOU.

IF...JUST *IF* THAT INCIDENT SHOULD SOMEHOW FLARE UP AGAIN...

...AND...

...AND THE SPARKS SHOULD BURN YOU AND YOUR PARENTS... I WANT YOU NOT TO HATE THAT MAN.

IT'S ALL MY FAULT.

MINE AND MY FATHER

?

IF YOU BEGIN TO HATE THAT MAN...

...THEN NO DOUBT HIS OWN OFFSPRING WILL SEEK TO END YOUR LIFE AS WELL.

IF WE DON'T WANT TO LOSE EVERY-THING...

...THEN WE MUST BE STRONG.

AAH...I'M SORRY. YOU MUST WONDER WHY I'M TELLING YOU ALL THIS, NOW...

WELL, *UM*... YEAH. BUT I DIDN'T REALLY UNDERSTAND ALL OF IT.

IN THAT CASE, DON'T YOU WORRY ABOUT IT.

AS FAR AS I'M CON-CERNED...

...I PRAY YOU'LL NEVER HAVE TO REMEMBER THAT WE EVER TALKED ABOUT IT.

RIN!

FATHER!

IT'S MOM AN' DAD!

AH, YOU'RE TOO STRICT WITH HER, TAKAYOSHI.

DID YOU REMEMBER TO SAY THANK YOU?

DAD! AFTER ALL I SAID ABOUT CANDY...

UH-HUH!

RIN, DO YOU WANT TO MAKE AN OFFER-ING?

FOR ALL OF US?!

YOUR FATHER AND I ALREADY MADE OURS. SO JUST YOUR SHARE, DEAR.

HOO

OW!
UNG!
!

whewww

OH. DEAR! I CAN'T STAND THESE CROWDS!
BUT I GOT TO MAKE MY WISH!

REALLY? AND WHAT DID YOU WISH FOR?

THAT NONE OF US GET BURNED BY SPARKS!

PARDON...?

HEE HEE!

WHAT'D DADDY WISH FOR, MOM?

PEACE FOR OUR WHOLE FAMILY.

HE'S ALWAYS SO SERIOUS, THAT MAN...

AND THEN... *UMM...*

...WHAT DID YOU WISH FOR, MOMMY?!

MY WISH...?

IT'S A ***SECRET!***

"MY WISH...? IT'S A SECRET!"

I WONDER WHAT IT WAS....

SHE'S BEEN WAITING FOR LIKE AN *HOUR!*

C'MON, DAD! HURRY UP!

I KNOW, I KNOW...

!

ARE YOU *CRAZY!?* YOU CAN'T WEAR *THAT!*

COULDN'T YOU JUST... OH, *JEEZ!*

IT'S NOT *THAT* DIRTY, IS IT...?

CALM YOUR-SELF...

DAD, THIS ISN'T ONE OF YOUR SCRUFFY DRINKING BUDDIES, OKAY?

YOU LEFT YOUR SWORD BACK AT THE HUT...

HE DIDN'T EVEN SEE ME YESTER-DAY...

PLUS, THERE'S NO REASON FOR HIM TO BE ON GUARD...

AND I'VE CHANGED, A LOT, THESE LAST TWO YEARS.

!
AH.
HA!

YOU ALMOST *NEVER* REMEMBER TO PUT OUT TEA FOR COMPANY!

FWAP

AND THIS TIME YOU EVEN DID UP SOME SNACKS-- WAY TO GO, KIDDO!

COME ON... WHY SHOULD I BOTHER MAKING TEA FOR THOSE DRUNKS YOU HANG OUT WITH?

I'LL GO CLEAN UP THE DOWN-STAIRS.

TRY TO BEHAVE YOURSELF FOR ONCE, OKAY, DAD...?

LECTURED TO BY MY OWN SON..

mmph!

NO, NO... I SHOULDN'T HAVE LAUGHED.

HEH... SORRY...

MY SON, HE'S... WELL...

THE AMAZING THING IS...

...THIS IS THE CLEANEST ROOM IN THE HOUSE. YOU MUST BE SHOCKED.

OH, NO, NO.

THIS IS WHERE I MAKE ALL MY MASKS...

...SO AT LEAST THERE'S AN EXCUSE FOR THE MESS.

WHEN I WAS TALKING TO RENZO, HE TOLD ME THAT...

...YOU HAD YOUR BOOTH SET UP AT THE TEMPLE FAIR YESTER-DAY.

I WOULDN'T HAVE THOUGHT YOU'D BE BACK AT WORK THE VERY NEXT MORNING.

YEAH... SEEING HOW I LIVE, YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE IT, BUT I'M A BIT OF A WORK-AHOLIC.

YOU SELL OUT ON HOLIDAYS, GOT TO MAKE MORE STOCK BY THE NEXT ONE. AND BESIDES...

...I FIGURE KIDS WHO GROW UP SEEING THEIR FOLKS LYING AROUND THE HOUSE ALL THE TIME WON'T COME TO MUCH GOOD THEMSELVES.

RIGHT...?

MY...!

THAT'S VERY ADMIRABLE.

ER... ...

THIS ISN'T GOING VERY WELL...

WHO?

YOU'RE LOOKING FOR THE MASK MAKER?

YOU THINK HE MEANS THAT KAWAKAMI GUY?

YEAH, MUST BE ARAYA, ALL RIGHT.

SO? WHERE CAN I FIND HIM?

WHADDA WE DO NOW, GUYS?

DO? WHATCHA MEAN, *DO*?

NO FUN HAVIN' SOME *GUY* POUR US DRINKS.

YEAH, BUT LIKE, WE CAN'T TELL HIM FOR FREE, HUH?

SO... MONEY THEN?

NAW. HOW ABOUT HAVE HIM TAKE DOWN THE STAND FOR US?

YEAH! GOOD! GREAT IDEA! SAVES US THE TROUBLE, HUH?

OKAY, YOU TELL--

CHOK CHOK

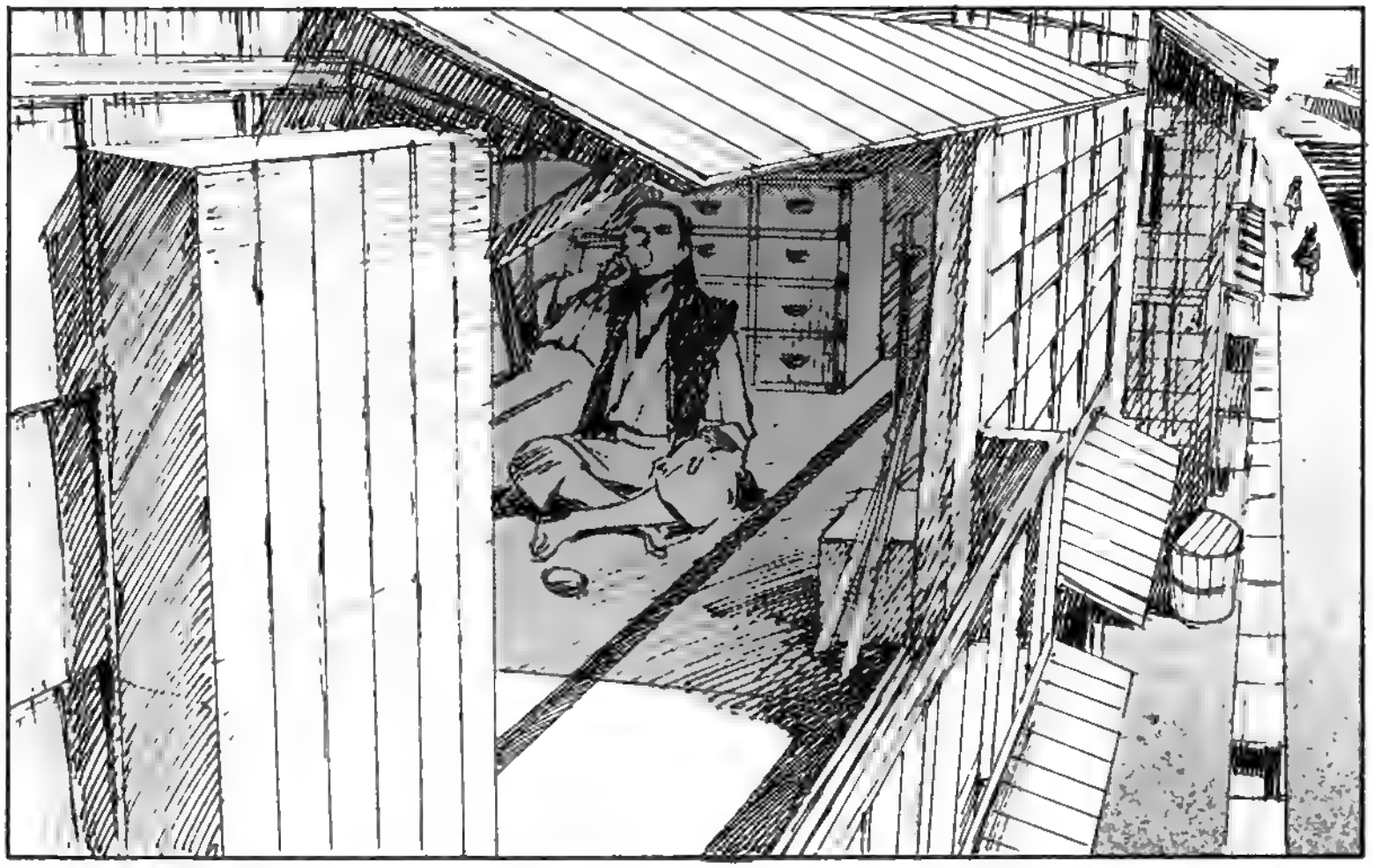
WHKK WHKK

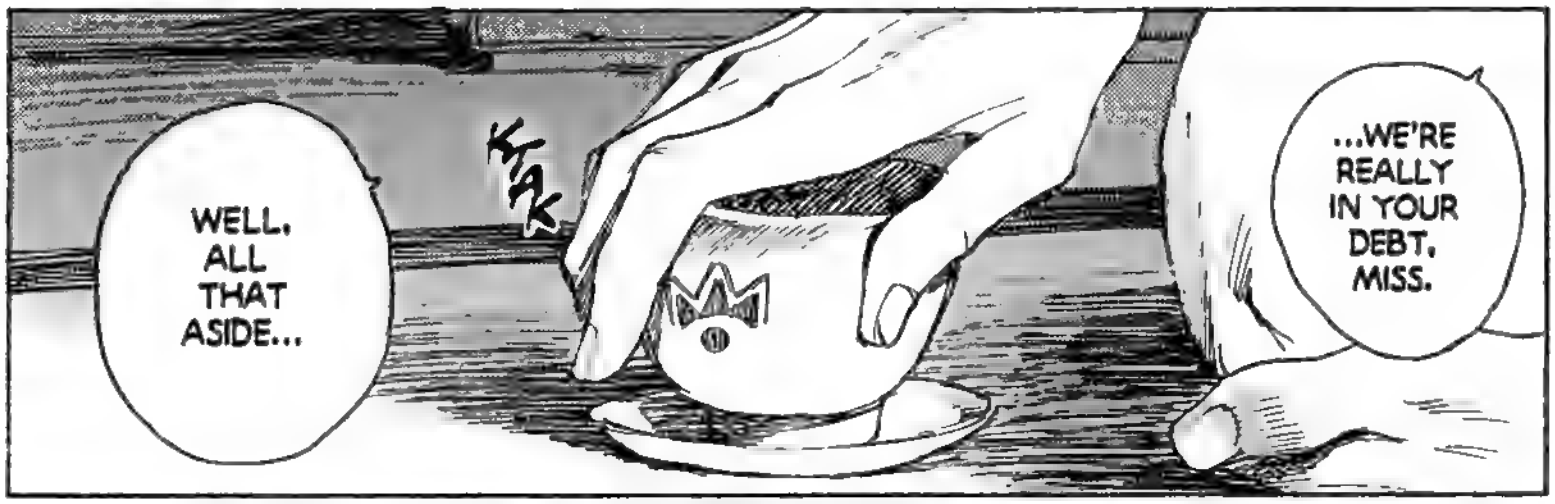
WHKK

WELL...?

HOW'S THAT?

TH-THANKS, DUDE..




KTAK
WELL, ALL THAT ASIDE...
...WE'RE REALLY IN YOUR DEBT, MISS.

NOT MANY PEOPLE WOULD HAVE RISKED THEIR LIFE FOR THE SON OF A TOTAL STRANGER.
IF IT'S NOT TOO MUCH OF AN IMPOSITION, MIGHT I ASK WHERE YOU LIVE...?

I'D LIKE A CHANCE TO OFFER PROPER THANKS TO YOUR FAMILY.

OH, NO.

WRONG, ALL WRONG!

PLEASE DON'T FEEL YOU HAVE TO GO TO SUCH TROUBLE.

ER... SORRY, SORRY.

I'M NOT VERY GOOD AT THIS SORT OF THING.

I DIDN'T COME HERE FOR THIS...

IF I'D BEEN THERE AT THE TIME...

...I COULD HAVE SPARED A YOUNG LADY SUCH SHAMEFUL TREATMENT.

ACTUALLY, YEARS AGO...

...I USED TO SWING A SWORD MYSELF.

OH, REALLY...!

YEAH. ME AND MY BUDDIES, WE USED TO RAISE HELL. BUT THANKS TO THAT, WELL...

IT'S KIND OF EMBARRASSING, BUT MY WIFE LEFT ME AND TOOK RENZO WITH HER.

THEN-- A YEAR AND A HALF AGO, I GUESS IT WAS--SHE FELL SICK AND DIED.

RENZO CAME BACK HERE, ALONE.

THAT WAS WHEN I GOT THE STRANGEST FEELING. IT WAS LIKE...

...IF A KID'S PARENTS ARE ALWAYS LIVING ON THE EDGE, THEN MAYBE...

...JUST MAYBE...

...THE KID'LL BE WALKING THAT SAME EDGE HIMSELF SOMEDAY. SEE WHAT I MEAN?

AND SO... I DECIDED THE NEXT "JOB" I DID WOULD BE MY LAST. I FOUND MYSELF THINKING, HEY...

...IT WOULDN'T BE SO BAD TO MAKE A NICE, QUIET LIVING WORKING WITH KIDS.

.....

OH.

THAT'S... NICE.

ER... ARE YOUR PARENTS WELL?

NO. ACTUAL-LY...

...BOTH OF THEM ARE AL-READY...

NO.

AH!

MAN, I'M SORRY...I DIDN'T MEAN TO UPSET YOU.

IT DOESN'T PAIN ME ANYMORE.

BUT, ACTUALLY...

...IF THE TRUTH BE TOLD...

...THEY WERE BOTH ***MURDERED.***

AT THE HANDS OF COMPLETE STRANGERS.

NO!
REALLY?!

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HEAR THE STORY ...?

BUT WHY ON EARTH ...?

IF ANYTHING... I'D FEEL RELIEVED IF YOU'D LISTEN.

IT'S BEEN SUCH A BURDEN TO CARRY ALL ALONE.

UH, SURE.

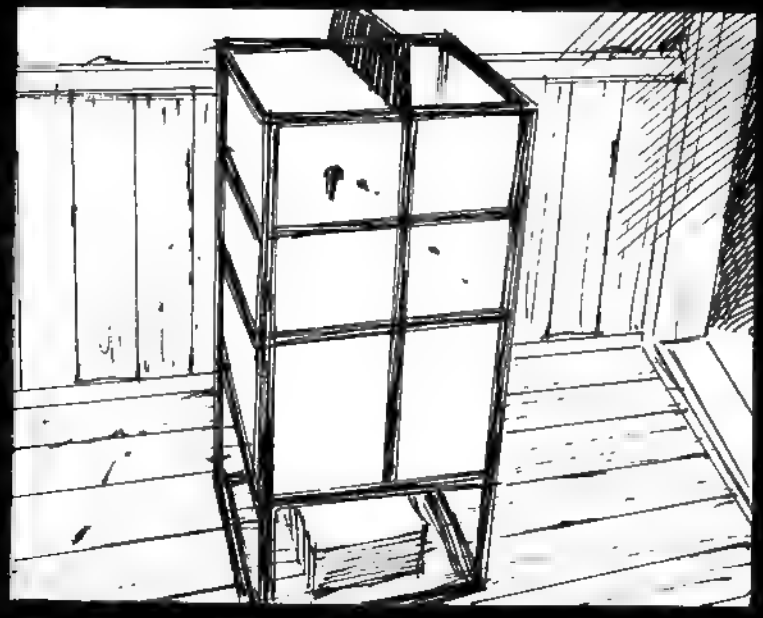
I GUESS IT WOULD BE KIND OF TOUGH.

SO, IF YOU REALLY THINK I'M THE RIGHT PERSON...

THANK YOU.

EVEN NOW I CAN REMEM-BER...

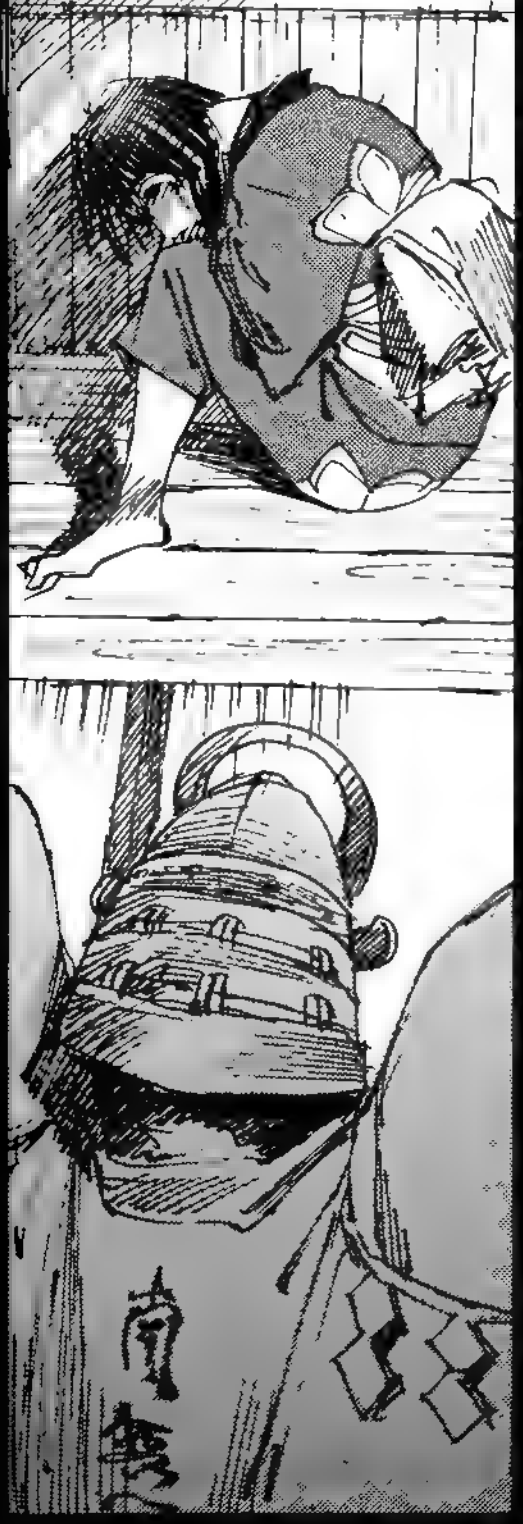
"...EVERY SECOND OF THAT DAY..."



HUSBAND!
MY LOVE, MY LOVE!

LEAV-
ING,
SIR?

I WANT EVERYONE BACK IN AN HOUR.
THE REST IS UP TO YOU.



Sniff
NO...
STOP..

D-
DON'T..
DON'T KILL MY MOTHER...

IS *THIS* THE WAY NOBLE MEN OF THE SWORD FIGHT?!
GANGING UP ON A *SINGLE MAN*?!

AAA!

HEY, THE ONLY ONES FIGHTING WERE ANOTSU AND KUROI.

SO DON'T GET US WRONG.

GUESS YOUR HUSBAND JUST WASN'T MAN ENOUGH, EH?

IF YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT US GANGING UP ON SOMEONE...

HEH, HEH, HEH...

...YOU BETTER WORRY ABOUT *YOUR-SELF!*

HOW PITIFUL.

!

LET HER GO.

WHO THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE TALKING TO...

...BOY?

DO YOU REALLY WANT TO GET YOUR ROCKS OFF WITH SOME OLD LADY IN A ROOM THAT STINKS OF GUTS?!

WHAT ARE YOU GUYS? ANIMALS?

LOOK, WOMAN--

--JUST KILL YOURSELF.

BUT NOT EVEN THESE MEN WOULD VIOLATE THE DEAD. SO...

YOU WILL NOT COME OUT OF THIS ALIVE IN ANY CASE.

.....

.....

ドス

AGH!

LISTEN, MAGATSU!
THIS AIN'T YOUR DECISION!

THE REST OF US...

...AREN'T WIMPS LIKE YOU!

WE'RE NOT DRAGGING OUR BUTTS ALL THE WAY OUT HERE FOR *NOTHING*, EH?

LOOK, IF YOU'RE HORNY ENOUGH TO DO ANOTHER MAN'S WIFE IN A PLACE LIKE THIS...

...WHY DON'T YOU JUST GO GRAB ONE OF THOSE WHORES OVER IN TATSUMI...?

YOU JUST DON'T GET IT, DO YOU, KID?

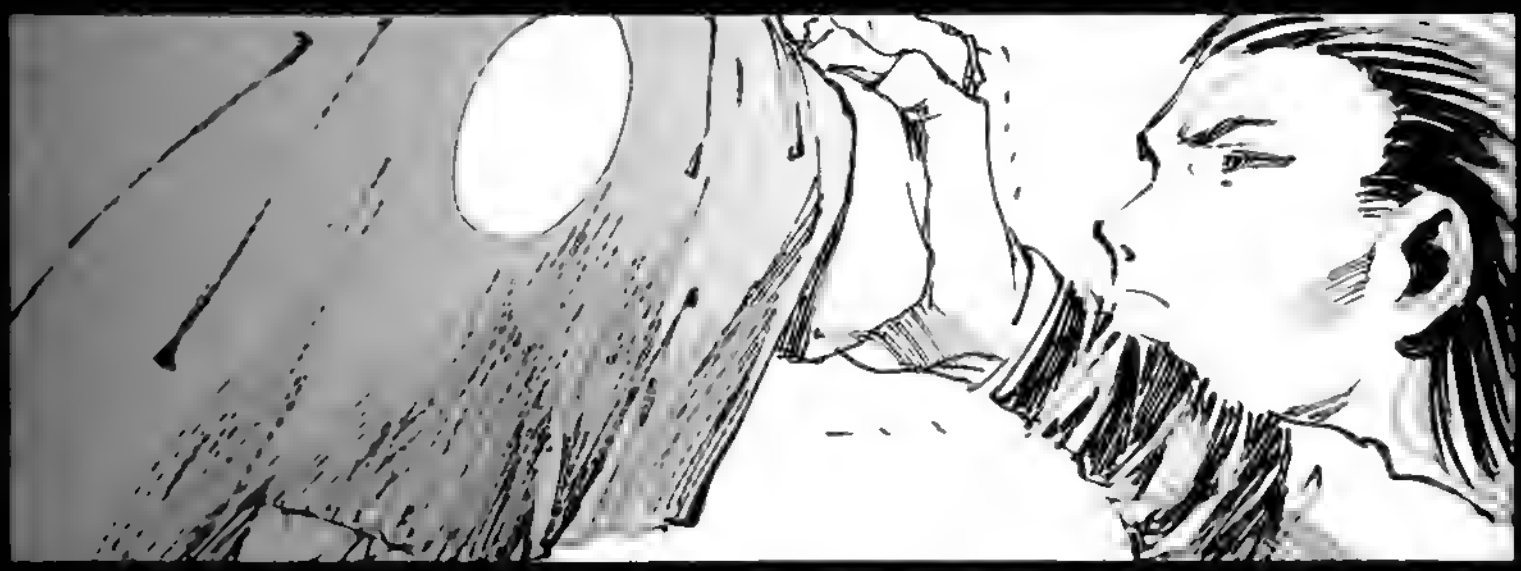
I GET HARD *BECAUSE* OF ALL THE BLOOD AND GUTS, *BECAUSE* IT'S HIS WIFE!

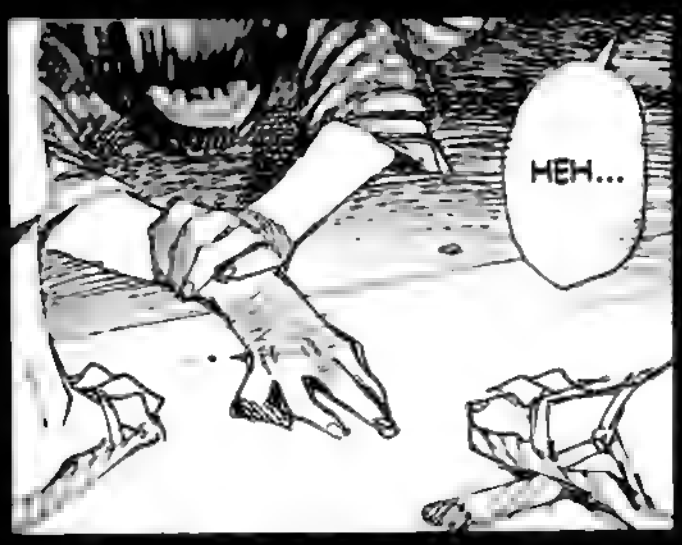
YOU PIECE OF SHIT. *THAT'S* WHY YOUR WOMAN RAN OUT ON YOU.

CAN'T YOU FIGURE THAT OUT?

HUH? A CRYING WOMAN DOESN'T TURN YOU ON?

WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM, KID? CAN'T GET IT UP? OR MAYBE YOU LIKE *BOYS*, HUH? HEH, HEH...




HEH...

C'MON, KID... YOU REALLY WANT...
...TO BE A HERO? HUH?!

WELL. SHIT.

I'M OUT OF HERE.

YOU GUYS MAKE ME PUKE.

SUIT YOUR-SELF.

OKAY.

HUH? OH, RIGHT...

NOT IN FRONT OF MY DAUGHT--
AH!
NO! PLEASE. NO!!

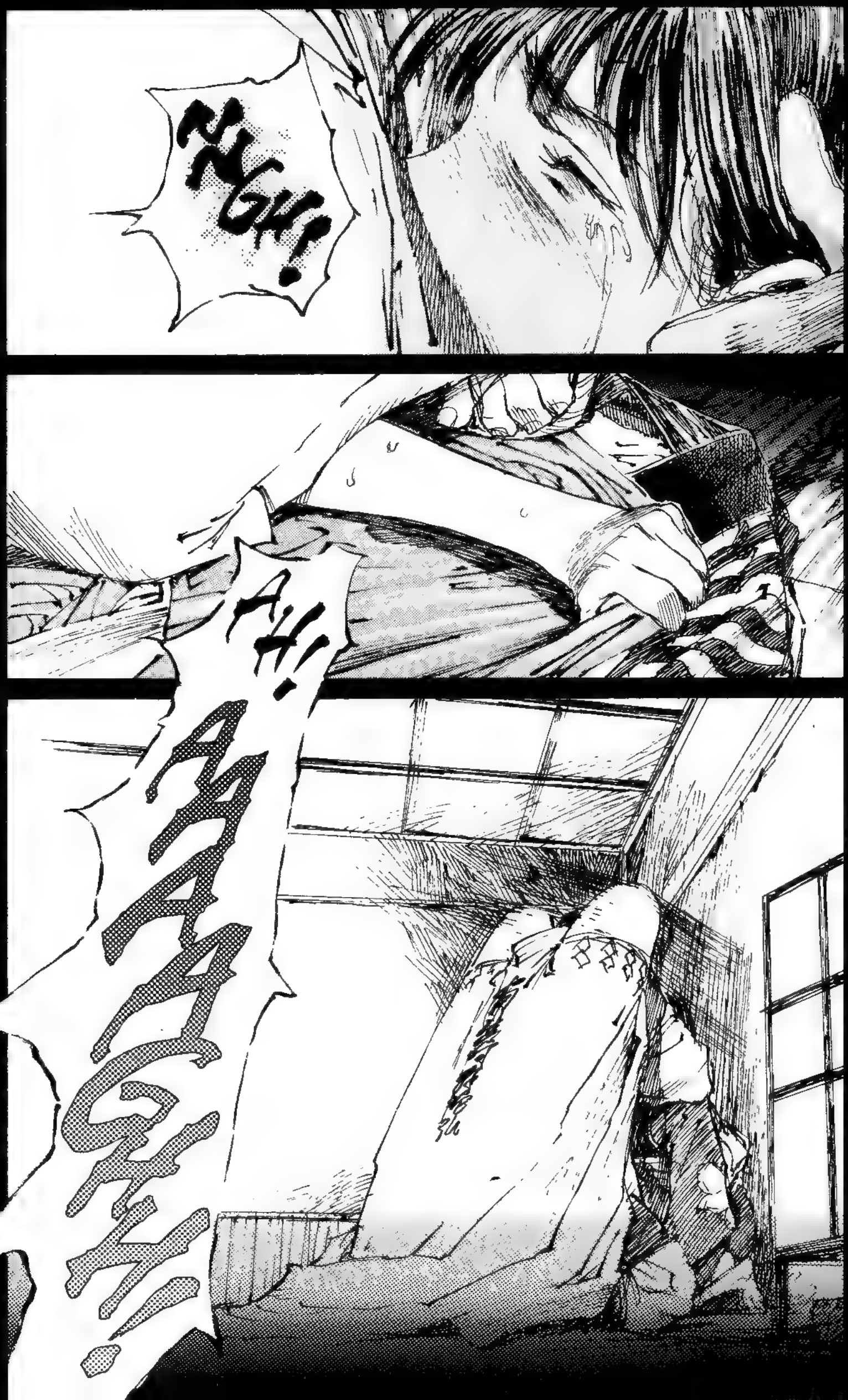
GOOD...

THAT SHOULD DO.

ALL RIGHT... LET'S DO IT.

SHUT THESE EYES; CLOSE THESE EARS, CHILD.

FOR WHAT COMES NEXT TRANSCENDS YOUR SANITY...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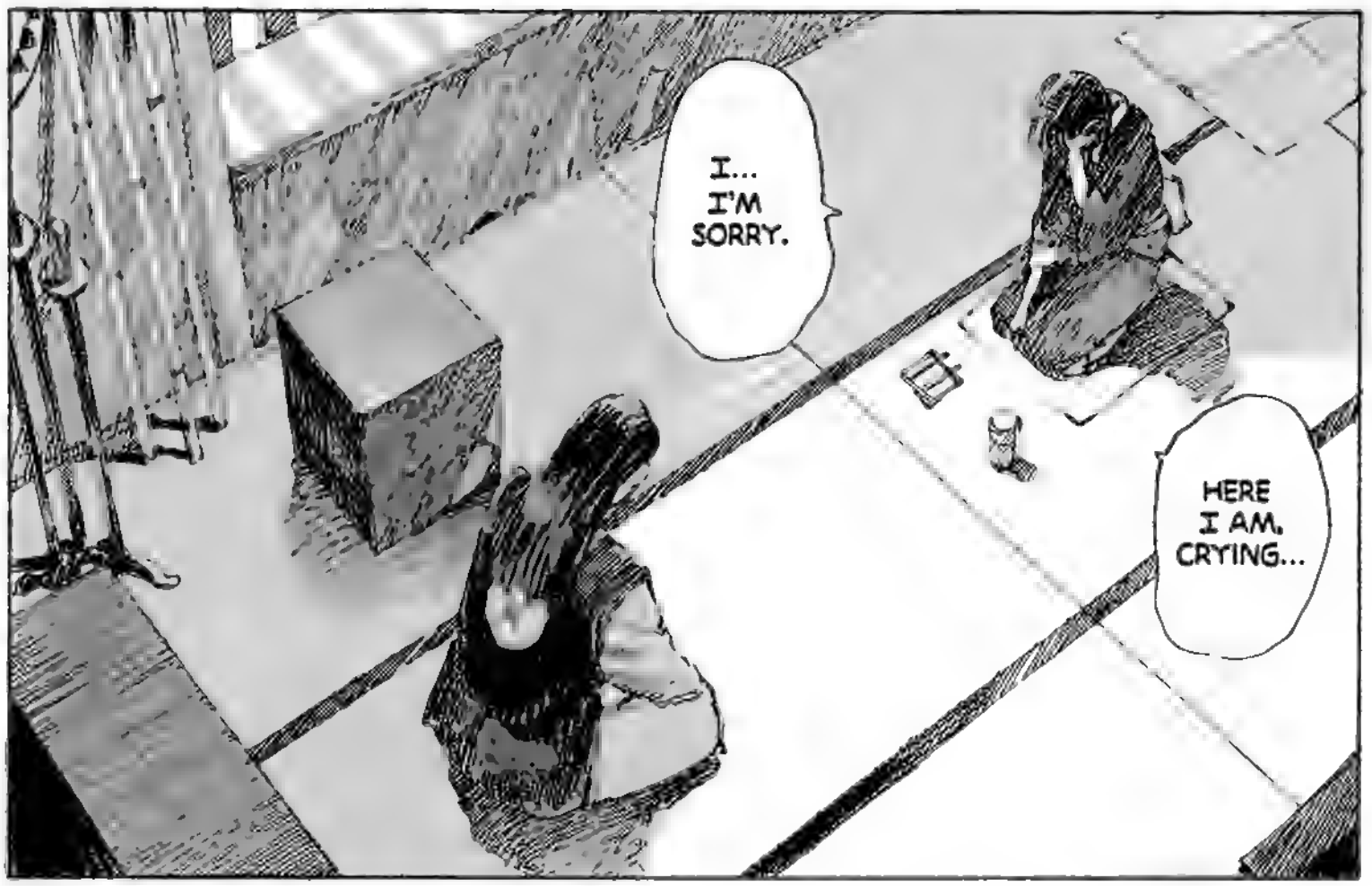
BAGGEN!

ON SILENT WINGS

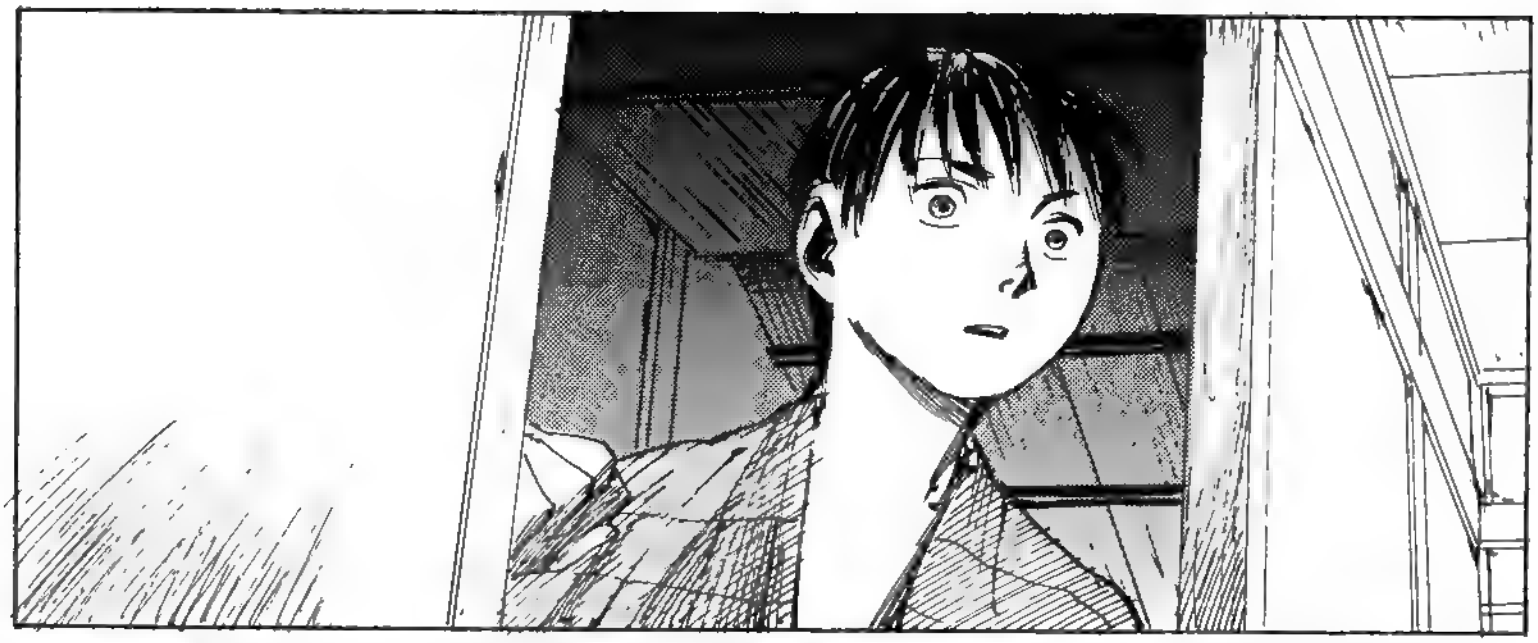
Part 4


I... I'M SORRY.
HERE I AM, CRYING...

hmf

AND I SWORE THAT...

...UNTIL I FINISHED TELLING THIS STORY... I'D BURY ALL MY FEELINGS.



HUH? RIN? WHAT'S WRONG ...?

DAD! WHAT DID--
NO, RENZO, IT'S OKAY.

IT'S JUST THAT...
...YOUR DAD JUST LOOKS A LITTLE LIKE MY OWN FATHER. SO I WAS REMEMBERING THE OLD DAYS.

WELL, OKAY THEN.

REAL-LY...?

I BROUGHT SOME MORE HOT TEA.

Uh... OH YEAH! HERE!

RENZO ...?

DO YOU... LOVE YOUR FATHER?

Um...

WELL...

I MEAN, IT'S LIKE...

...LIKE I CAN'T JUST SAY IT IN FRONT OF HIM...

HA, HA... I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN, RENZO.

RENZO!

THE TEA LEAVES ARE STALE!

EH?!

ARE YOU SURE? I--

I'M SURE. THEY'RE STALE. SORRY, BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO...

...GO BUY SOME MORE.

I'LL GO HIT MIKAWA-YA.

OKAY ...?

NO. GET IT AT FUNAMORI-YA, OVER BY THE *DAIMON* IN ASAKUSA.

WHAT?!

I GOTTA GO WAY OVER THERE?!

MIKAWA-YA SELLS CHEAP JUNK, RENZO. COME ON!

SHE'S AN IMPORTANT GUEST-- SHE SAVED YOUR LIFE, DIDN'T SHE?!

YEAH, OKAY, OKAY...

SEE YA IN A HALF HOUR OR SO!

YOU DON'T MIND WAITING, DO YOU?

WHY... NO.

"THANK YOU FOR BEING SO CONSIDER-ATE."

THE REST OF OUR DISCUS-SION...

...I WOULDN'T WANT THE BOY TO OVERHEAR IT.

HEH.

YEAH, I GUESS NOT.

AND KILLING THE GUY WHO MURDERED YOUR MOTHER?

GUESS YOU MIGHT NOT SLEEP AS WELL IF HIS SON SAW YOU DOING IT, HUH?

I...

I DIDN'T COME HERE TO KILL YOU.

NOW *THAT'S* WEIRD.

YOU AND YOUR FRIEND HAVE ALREADY OFFED TEN OF MY COMRADES.

AND NOW YOU SAY YOU'LL JUST *FORGET IT?* WHAT I DID THAT NIGHT?

F...F... *FORGET...?*

NEVER.

KAWAKAMI ARAYA!

I... YOU...

YOU MEN, KILLERS OF MY FATHER...

YOU WHO TOOK MY MOTHER TO HELL ITSELF...

NO, I REMEMBER EVERYONE WHO WAS THERE!

I'LL REMEMBER THEM UNTIL THE DAY I DIE!

YES! *YES!!* YOU'RE *RIGHT!*

WE *DID* KILL YOUR FRIENDS! ALL TEN OF THEM!

BUT *SO WHAT?!*

THE MUTENICHI-RYU STUDENTS YOU KILLED...? THERE WERE A *LOT* MORE THAN TEN! *WAY* MORE!

SO IT'S JUSTICE, RIGHT?!

THERE!! YOU ASKED FOR IT-- *THAT'S* HOW I FEEL!

AND SO? THEN WHAT DO YOU DO...

...ABOUT *ME?*

IF... IF YOU WERE THE SAME MAN YOU WERE BACK THEN, I...

...I KNOW I WOULD HAVE KILLED YOU YESTERDAY.

BUT NOW... TODAY... YOU'RE RENZO'S FATHER.

HIS LAST LIVING PARENT.

I GUESS THE BOY DOESN'T EVEN KNOW OF THE FACE BEHIND YOUR MASK.

REALLY CAN GO BACK TO BEING A NORMAL PERSON, LIKE IT NEVER EVEN HAPPENED.

MAYBE SOMEONE WHO DID WHAT YOU DID...

BUT IF YOU ASK ME. IT'S A BIT UNLIKELY.

STILL, IF I WERE TO TAKE YOUR LIFE NOW...

...I UNDERSTAND ALL TOO WELL WHAT IT WOULD DO TO RENZO. *PAINFULLY* SO.

IF I KILL YOU HERE TODAY...

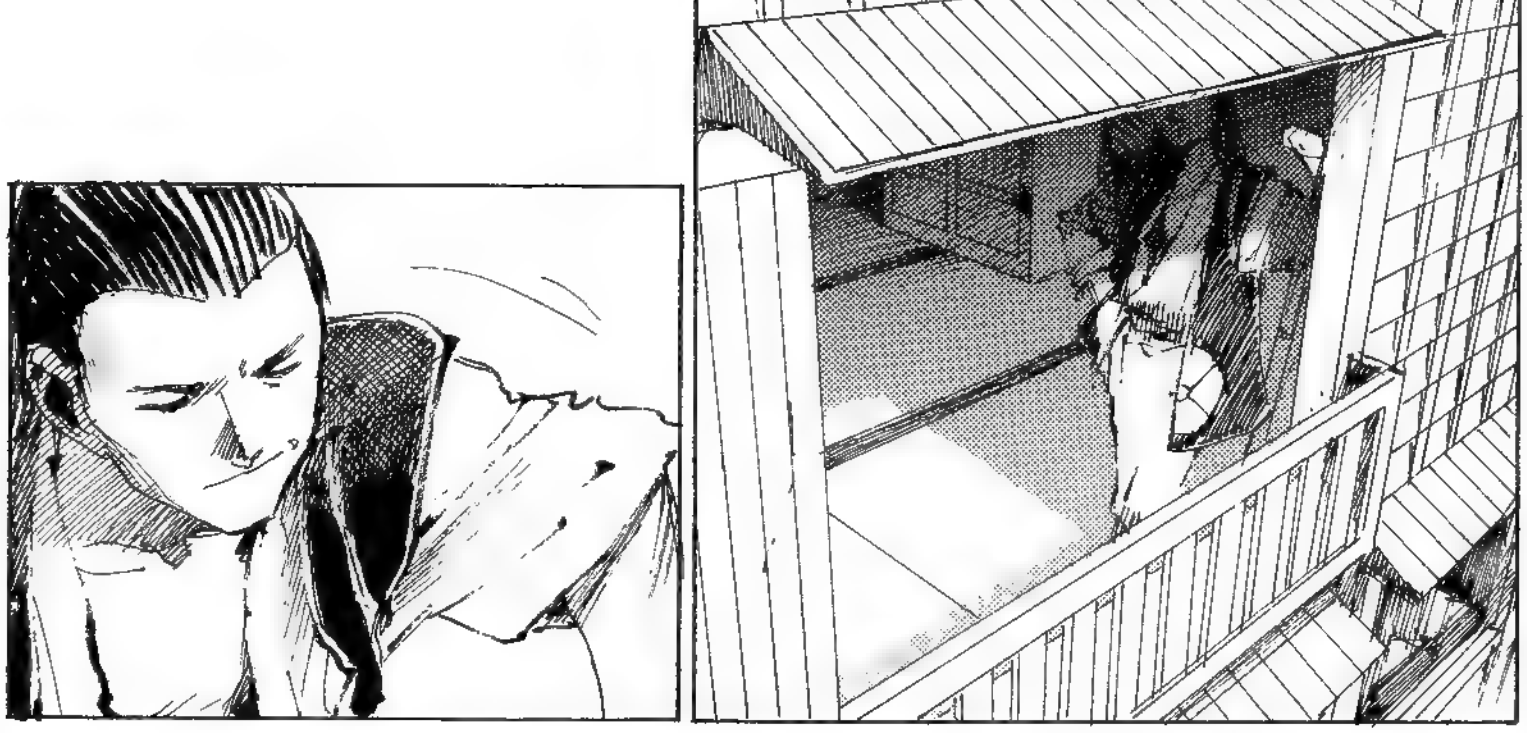
CAN THERE BE ANYTHING MORE TRAGIC? MORE POINTLESS ...?

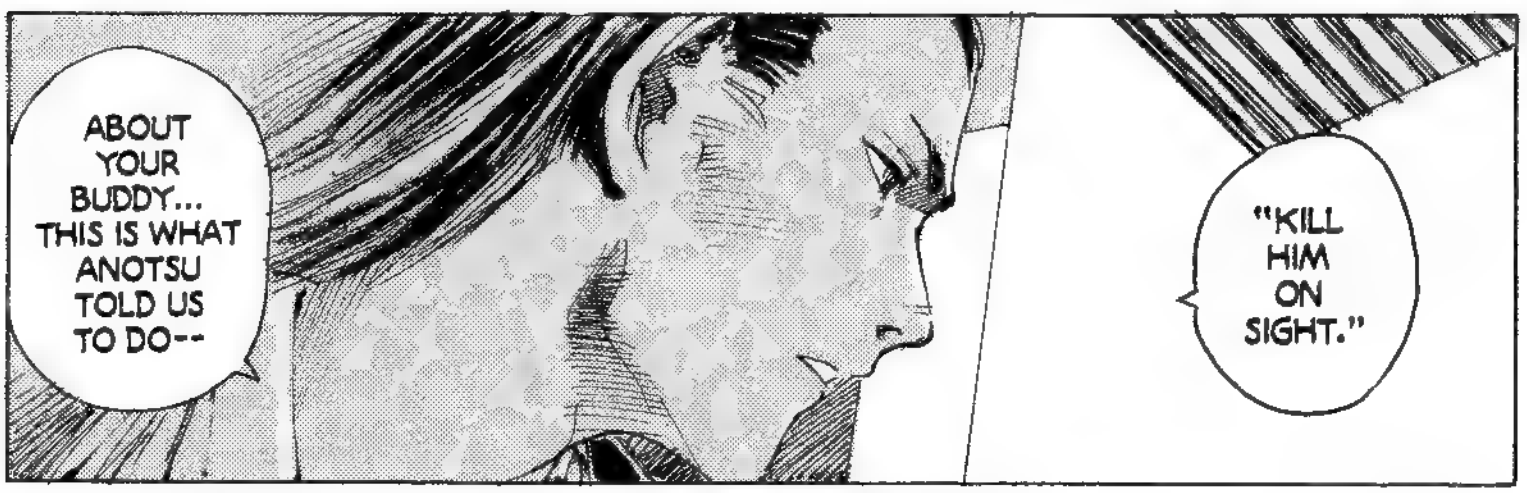
THEN YOUR SON WILL SPEND HIS WHOLE LIFE WITH HIS SOUL IN TURMOIL, DREAMING OF REVENGE AGAINST HIS FATHER'S KILLER.

AT THIS RATE, I'LL JUST KEEP MEETING NEW PEOPLE, HATING THEM, KILLING THEM...

THAT KIND OF LIFE, I...

...I JUST CAN'T TAKE IT ANY-MORE.




ABOUT YOUR BUDDY... THIS IS WHAT ANOTSU TOLD US TO DO--
"KILL HIM ON SIGHT."

BUT...
...ABOUT YOU--

"I LEAVE IT TO YOUR INDIVIDUAL JUDGMENT," HE SAID.

AREN'T YOU SCARED? TROTTING OVER HERE UNARMED...

...NOT EVEN PLANNING TO KILL ME?

IF I WANT TO, RIGHT HERE AND NOW...

...I CAN DO YOU THE SAME WAY I DID YOUR MOTHER!

NO.

YOU CAN'T.

YOU DIDN'T EVEN REMEMBER THAT I'M THE DAUGHTER OF ASANO TAKAYOSHI, DID YOU?

NO! IT'S EVEN BETTER THAN THAT!

UNTIL YOU HEARD ABOUT ME FROM ANOTSU...

...YOU'D PROBABLY FORGOTTEN THAT COUPLE YOU KILLED EVEN *HAD* A DAUGHTER!

AND THAT'S GOOD. IT GAVE ME SOME ELEMENT OF SURPRISE.

SO DON'T MAKE ANY SUDDEN MOVES, GOOD SIR. I DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU'VE HIDDEN YOUR SWORD...

...BUT I'LL BET I CAN DRAW AND STRIKE LONG BEFORE YOU REACH IT.

BUT AS I SAID...

...I DIDN'T COME HERE TO KILL YOU.

IT WAS JUST THAT, NOW THAT YOU'RE A FATHER YOUR-SELF...

...I WANTED TO TELL YOU HOW IT FEELS.

YOU, WHO STOLE FROM MY MOTHER HER LAST SHRED OF A WOMAN'S PRIDE...

...I WANT YOU TO APOLOGIZE FOR THAT INSULT... FROM THE BOTTOM OF YOUR HEART.

THAT'S ALL.

HNG...

HA HA HA HA!

THD

HNF...

BWA HAW HAW HAW!

HEH... UNREAL!

AN *APOLOGY*, SHE SAYS. RIGHT?

NOW, *THIS* I DIDN'T EXPECT.

PRETTY DAMN CHEAP, IF YOU ASK ME... YOUR PARENTS' LIVES, YOUR MOTHER'S CHASTITY...

YOU REALLY MEAN IT?

IF I GET DOWN ON MY KNEES HERE, TOUCH MY HEAD TO THE FLOOR...

...YOU'LL REALLY DRIVE ALL THOSE THOUGHTS OF REVENGE FROM YOUR HEAD?

WELL, FINE FOR YOU, THEN. BUT LET'S SAY...

...THOSE TEN MEN YOU KILLED HAD KIDS OR WIVES OF THEIR OWN-- WHAT THEN?

IF YOU EVER RUN INTO ONE OF THEM, DO YOU PLAN TO JUST KNEEL...

...AND BEG FOR FORGIVE-NESS? DO YOU EXPECT TO GET IT?

IN THIS WORLD THERE'S ONLY ONE THING THAT CAN PAY FOR A LIFE.

ANOTHER LIFE!

THAT'S ALL.

YOU TOOK THAT BURDEN ON YOURSELF LONG AGO.

AND IF YOU'RE JUST AFRAID OF BLOOD, AND YOU'RE JUST TRYING TO FOOL YOURSELF...

...THEN THAT'S JUST A BUNCH OF--

WHAT?

THAT'S NOT WHAT I ASKED FOR. I WANT YOUR HANDS ON THE FLOOR!
RIGHT HERE!
RIGHT NOW!!

OR CAN'T YOU *KENSHI* DO ANYTHING WITHOUT DRAWING A SWORD...?

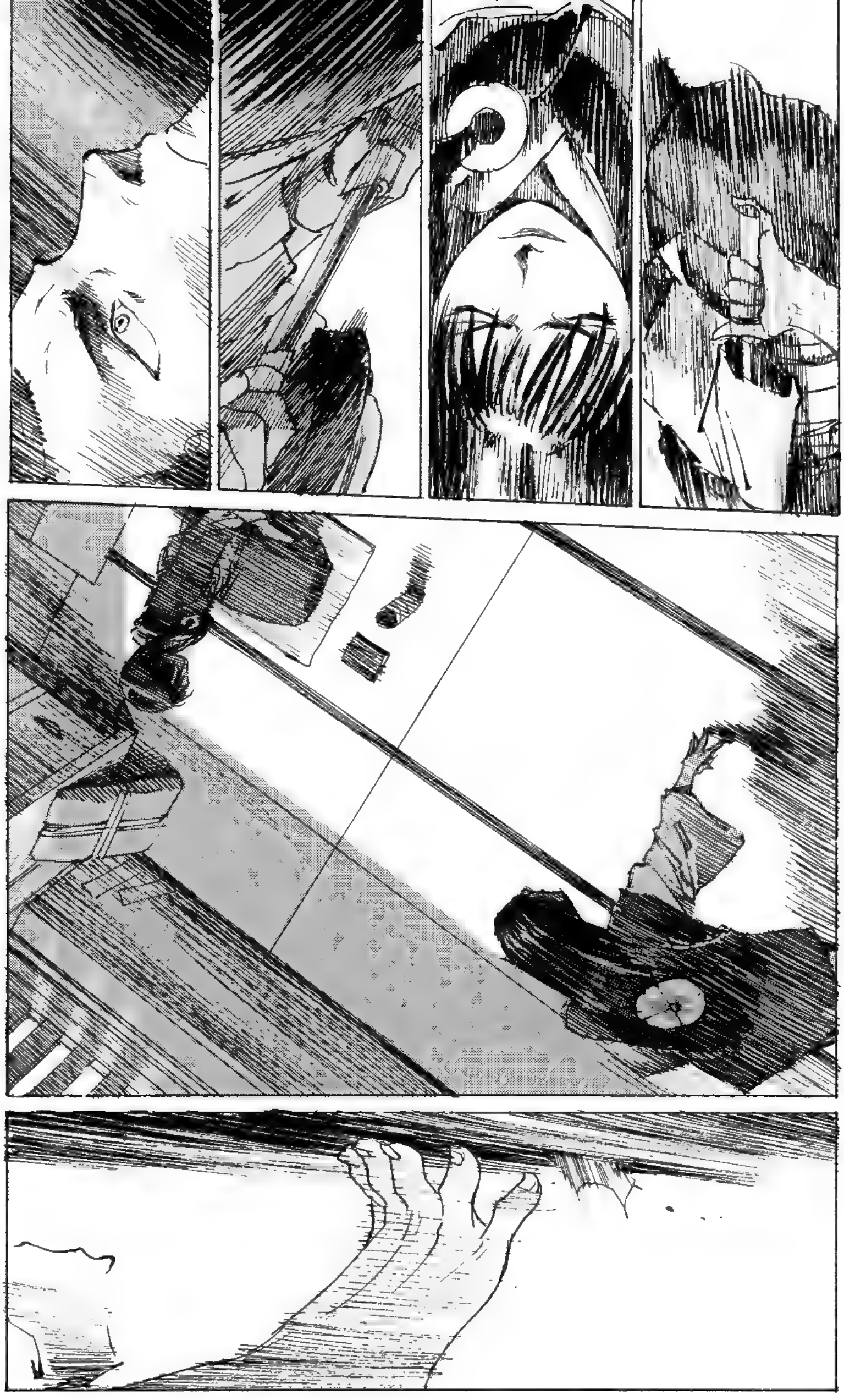
YOUNG LADY...

WATCH REAL CLOSE.

TWO YEARS AGO...

REPRESENTING MYSELF AND THOSE OTHERS WHO JOINED ME IN THAT INSULT, I...

...I COMMITTED NUMEROUS OUTRAGEOUS ACTS AGAINST YOUR HONORED MOTHER.



Crack

ぐはっ!

YEAH, WE CAN'T DO NOTHING WITHOUT A SWORD.
THAT'S WHY THEY CALL US KENSHI.

THE ME YOU SAW TWO YEARS AGO, HE WAS JUST A LOUSY PUNK.

MAYBE I DON'T UNDERSTAND THE NORMAL WORLD MUCH, BUT...

...WHEN RENZO CAME BACK TO ME, I FIGURED MAYBE NOW I COULD FINALLY WASH MY HANDS OF ALL THAT KILLING.

I DON'T WANT RENZO TO KNOW THE REAL ME. NOT MY ONLY SON.

BUT WHO COULD HAVE IMAGINED...

...THAT *YOU* WOULD BEFRIEND HIM?!

SORRY, GIRL. BUT...

...I'VE GOT TO NIP THIS IN THE BUD.

THIS IS ONE MASK I CAN NEVER TAKE OFF!

ON SILENT WINGS
Part 5

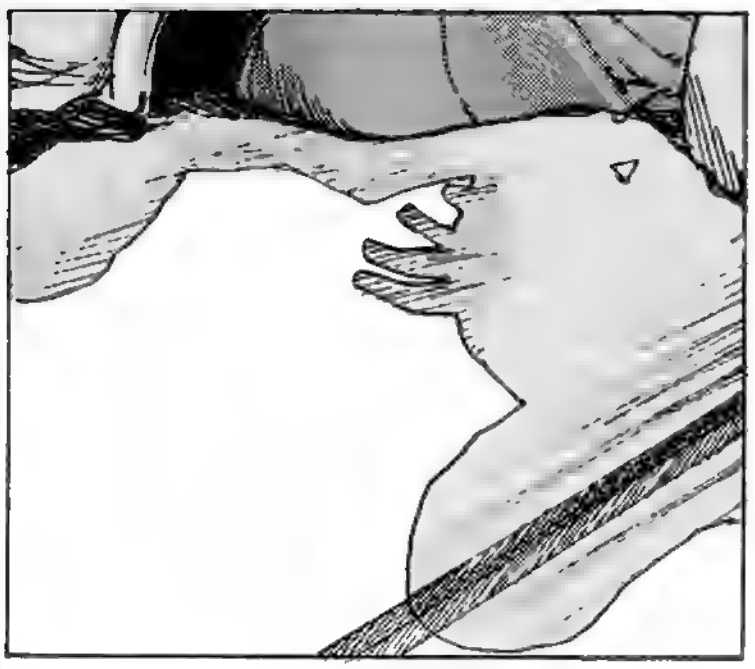
AND NOW...

I'VE GOT TO FINISH THIS.
BEFORE RENZO GETS BACK...

HMM... SHE NEEDS A LITTLE MORE... LIKE THIS...

THERE-- THAT'S GOOD.

NO BLOOD... TOO HARD TO CLEAN UP.
SO THAT LEAVES...



NNG...

SORRY, KID.

BUT THIS IS SOMETHING I JUST HAVE--

HEY, ARAYA ...?!

YOU HOME...?

THINK HE'S OUT?

HEY!

.....

.....

YO...!

IF YOUR BUSINESS CAN WAIT, CAN YOU COME BACK LATER?

I'M SORT OF BUSY RIGHT NOW.

WELL, ACTUAL-LY...

...IT AIN'T REALLY BUSI-NESS...

Hm?

psst SORRY, ARAYA.

HATE TA TELL YA THIS...

...BUT YOU BEEN *TRICKED*, MAN.

!

WHAM

SHKK

IT'S BEAUTIFUL WORK.

YOU GOT WEIRD TASTE.

BUT I LIKE IT. NOT BAD.

...

THANKS.

"MAKEUP TO MEET THE MAKER," HUH?

YEAH. SOME-THING LIKE THAT.

YOU GOT YOUR-SELF A GOOD KID.

YOU GOT TALENT YOU CAN TURN INTO CASH.

WHY STEAL THE LIFE FROM A GIRL WHO AIN'T GOT NOTHING AT ALL?

AND YOU?

WHY DO *YOU* WEAR A SWORD?

IF IT WAS JUST MY PROBLEM, I COULD GRIT MY TEETH AND BEAR IT.

BUT SONS, FRIENDS, PARENTS, BROTHERS...

ONCE THEY GET MIXED UP IN IT, I CAN'T KEEP MY BLADE SHEATHED.

YEAH, MAYBE THE FOLK I KILL GOT PROBLEMS OF THEIR OWN.

BUT IF IT COMES DOWN TO THEIR PROBLEMS VERSUS MY PROBLEMS... I'M NOT GOING TO HESITATE.

I MEAN, IF THAT SORTA THING BUGS YOU...

...YOU SHOULDN'T BE RUNNING AROUND SQUAWKING ABOUT VENGEANCE!

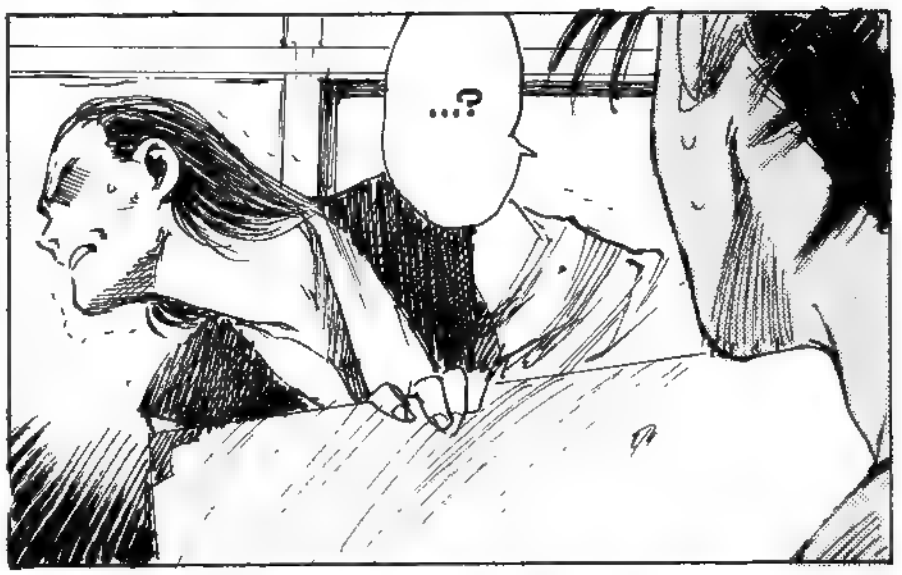
YEAH...

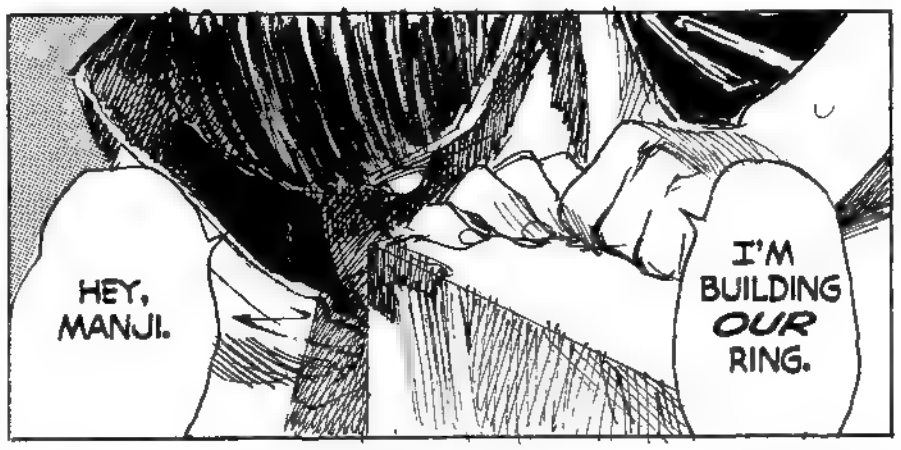
...SHE SHOULDN'T.

NOW THEN...

HYAH!!

OOOF!!


...?


HEY, MANJI.
I'M BUILDING OUR RING.

SO YOU MIND GIVING ME A HAND, PAL?

I MEAN...

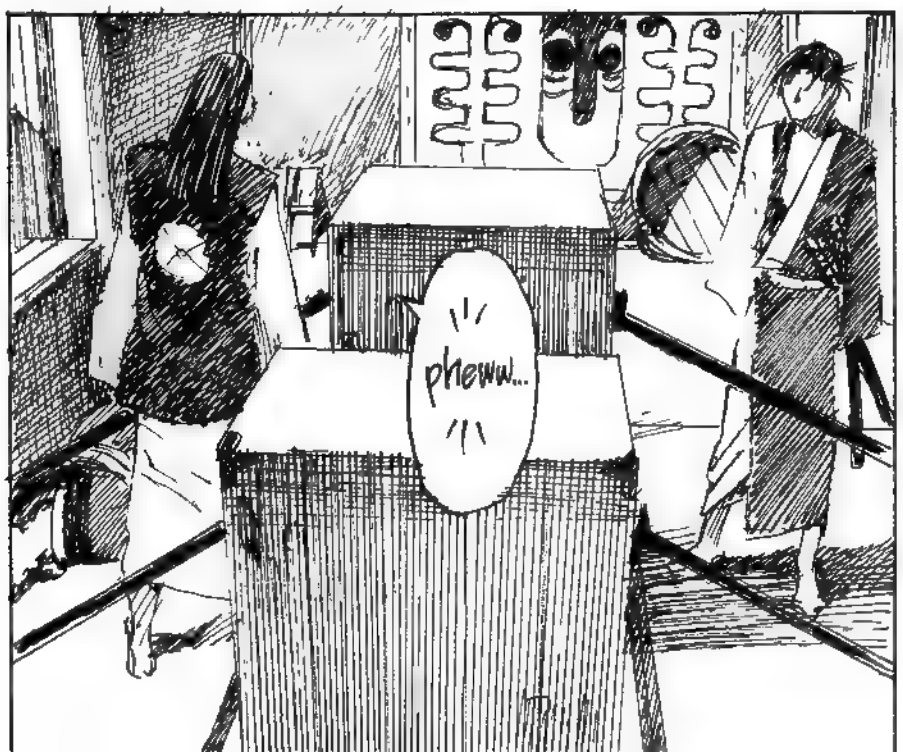
MAN, I ALMOST HATE TO ASK, BUT... WHY?

YOU REALLY WANNA FIGHT *INSIDE?*

STUCK IN A LITTLE BOX LIKE THIS...

...NEITHER OF US CAN GET A GOOD STROKE IN.

SHUK
THUD
KNNCH


phewww...

SO, ANY-WAY...

THE FACT IS, THERE'RE NO SWORDS IN THIS PLACE.

NOT ONE.

THE BOY MIGHT HAVE FOUND THEM, SEE?

SO, IF IT'S BLADES YOU WANT...

...ALL I'VE GOT IS YOUR LITTLE GIRL'S DAGGER.

SO TO MAKE UP FOR THAT...

...I'VE SET THE STAGE IN MY FAVOR.

AND NOW, A PREDIC-TION--

.....
.....

YOU ASK ME TO HELP...

...AND THEN YOU SET THINGS UP IN "YOUR FAVOR"?

YOU DON'T APPROVE ...?

WITH THIS ONE DAGGER, I'M GOING TO *DISSECT YOU*, BUDDY.

DIDN'T SAY *THAT*.

A LITTLE BEAUTY, YES?

BUT TOO STRONG-WILLED!

AND THIS...

THIS WAS THE WOMAN YOU CALLED...

I'LL KILL EVERY ONE OF YOU!

KILL YOU!

KILL...!

KILL...

kill...

S-STAY OUT OF MY DREAM...
WH... WHAT DO YOU WANT?!

I DON'T KNOW! IT'S NONE OF MY BUSINESS WHAT HAPPENS TO...
...TO A KENSHI

I JUST...

I JUST WANT TO PUNISH THE GUYS WHO KILLED MY MOTHER, MY FATHER...

...I KNOW THAT...

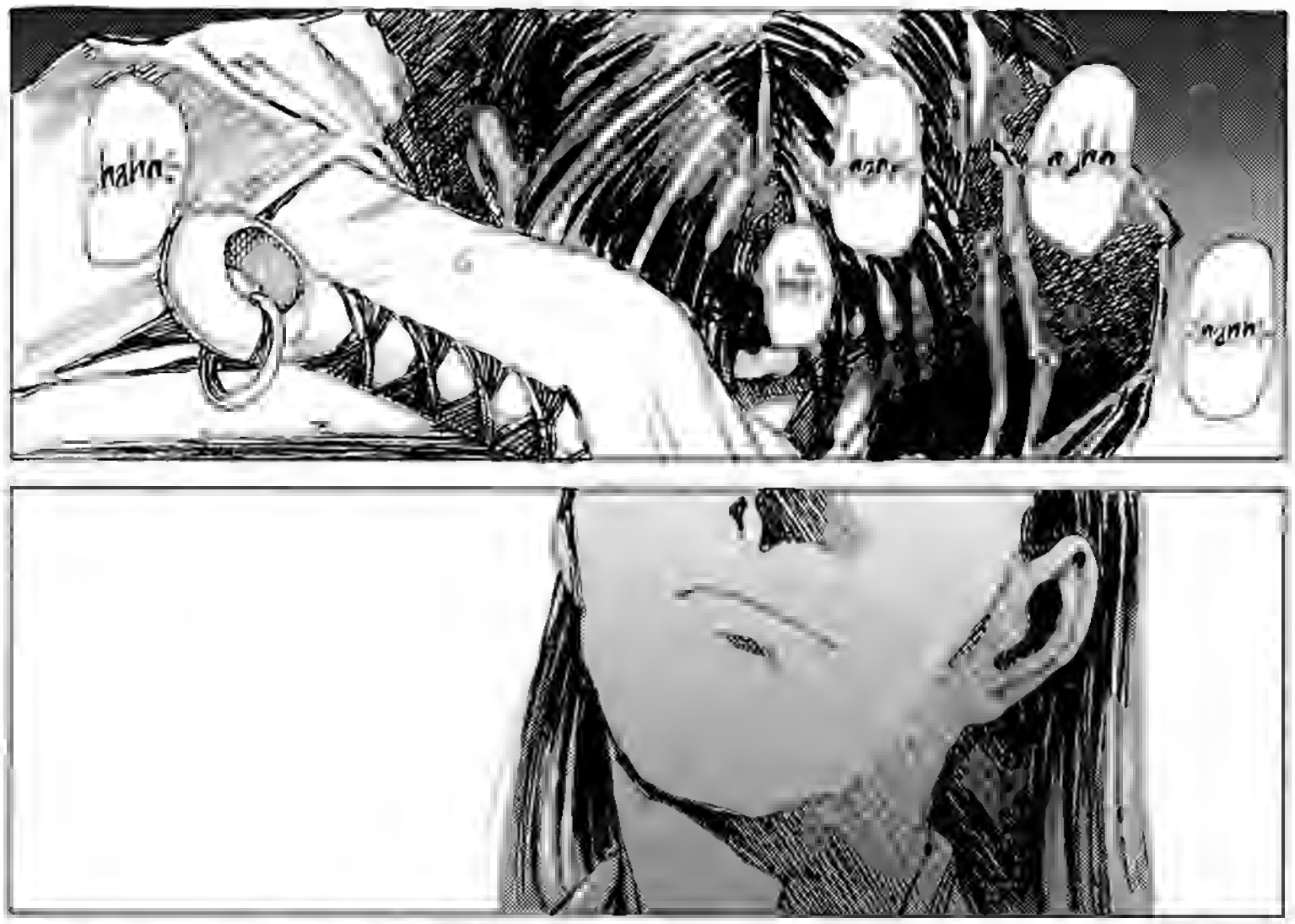
YES... I KNOW. REALLY DEEP INSIDE...

...MY HANDS COULD BE **SOAKED** IN BLOOD...

...AND IT STILL WOULDN'T BRING MY MOMMY AND DADDY BACK TO ME.

...AND I KNOW THAT SOMEONE WOULD SEE THAT BLOOD...

...AND CRY BECAUSE A PERSON THEY LOVED HAD BEEN KILLED...


STOP SCREWIN' AROUND, MAN.
COME ON!

I'M WAITING.

WEREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO "DISSECT" ME...?

AND YOU? YOU CAME HERE TO KILL ME, RIGHT?

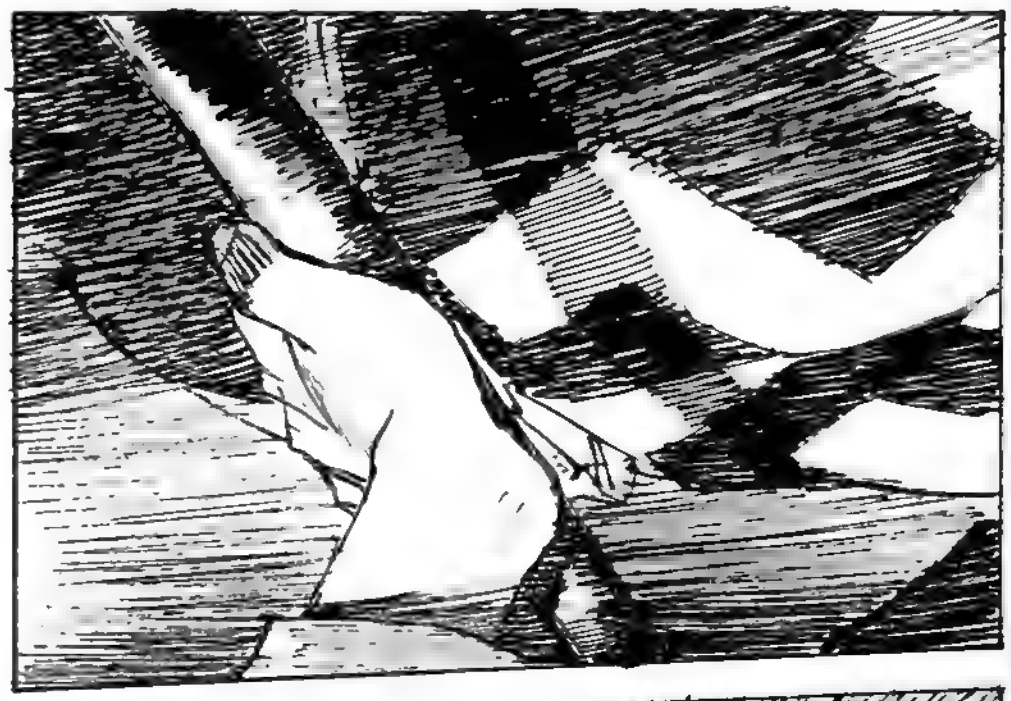
STOP HOLDING BACK AND GET ON WITH IT.

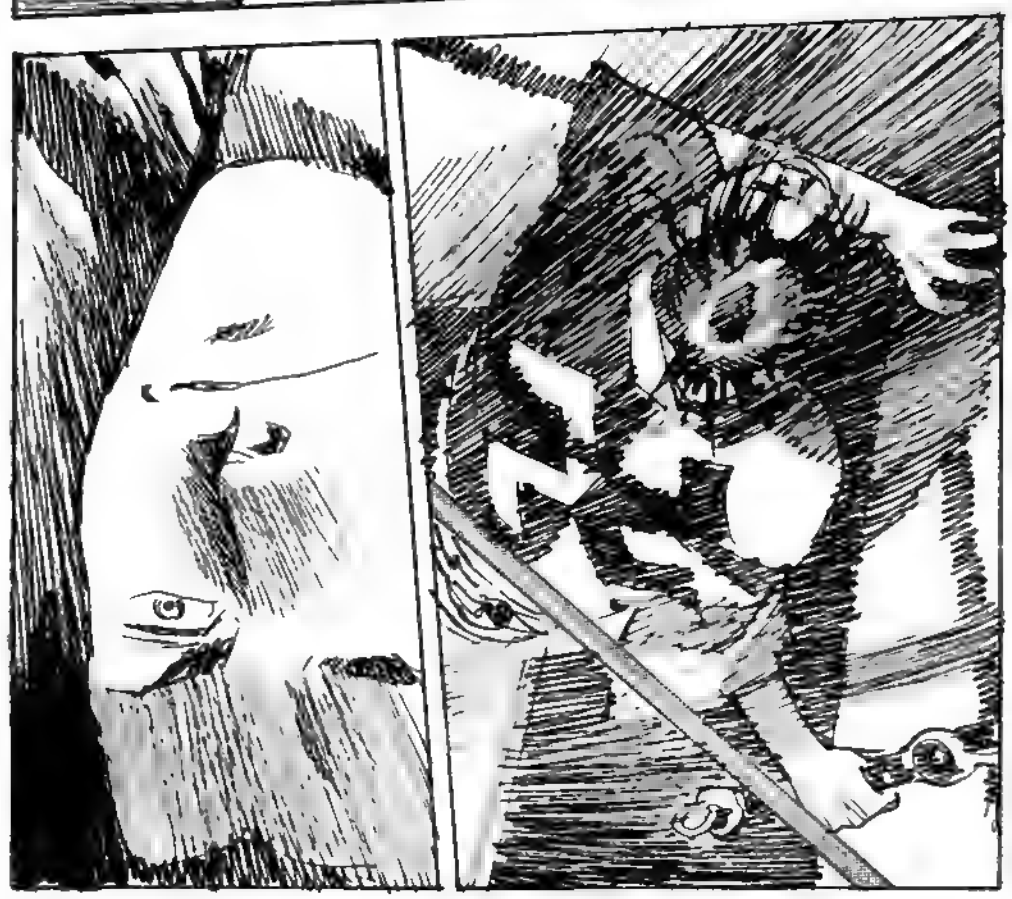
YOU'RE THE GUY WHO WHACKED A HUNDRED SAMURAI, RIGHT? SO WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM?

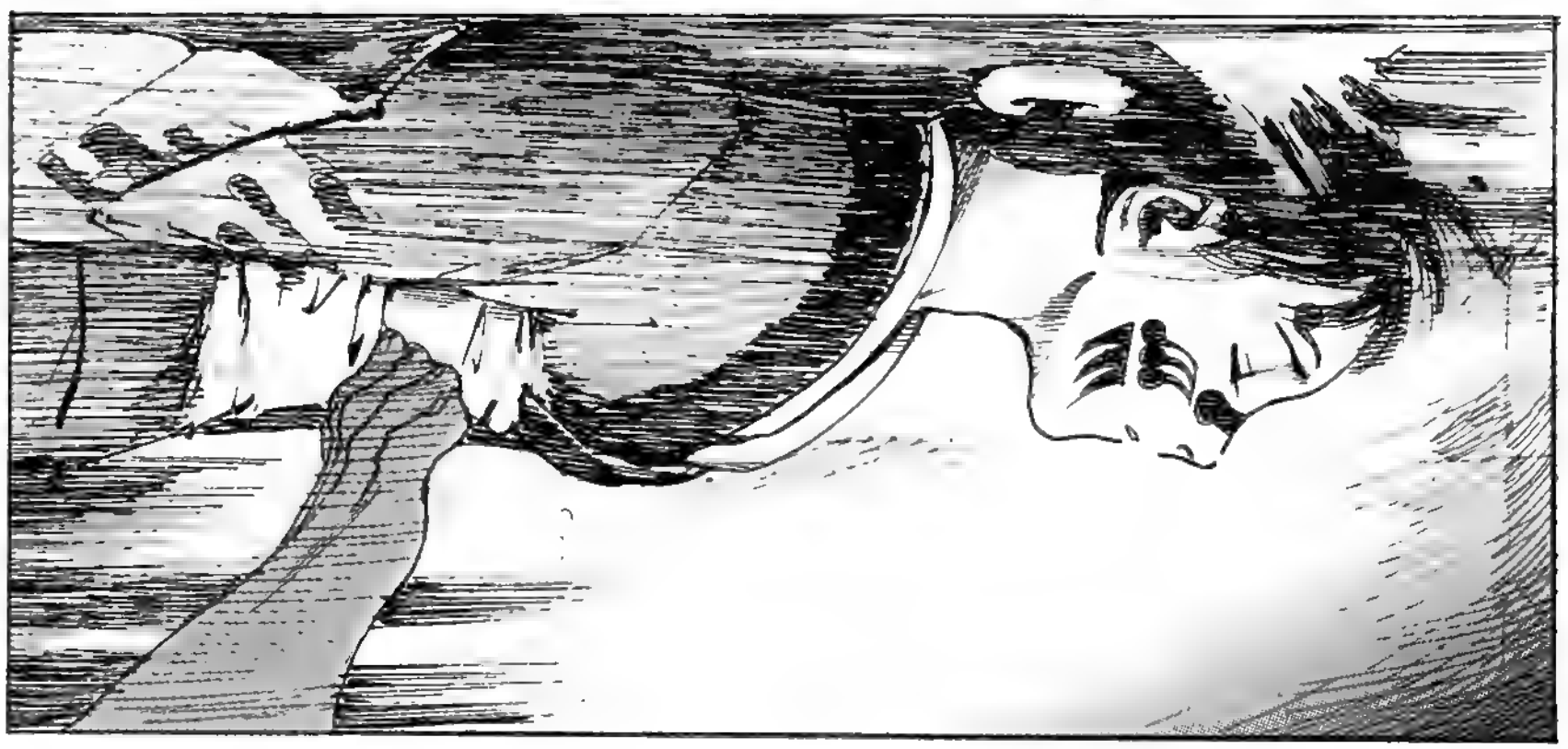
:hahh:

.....

.....





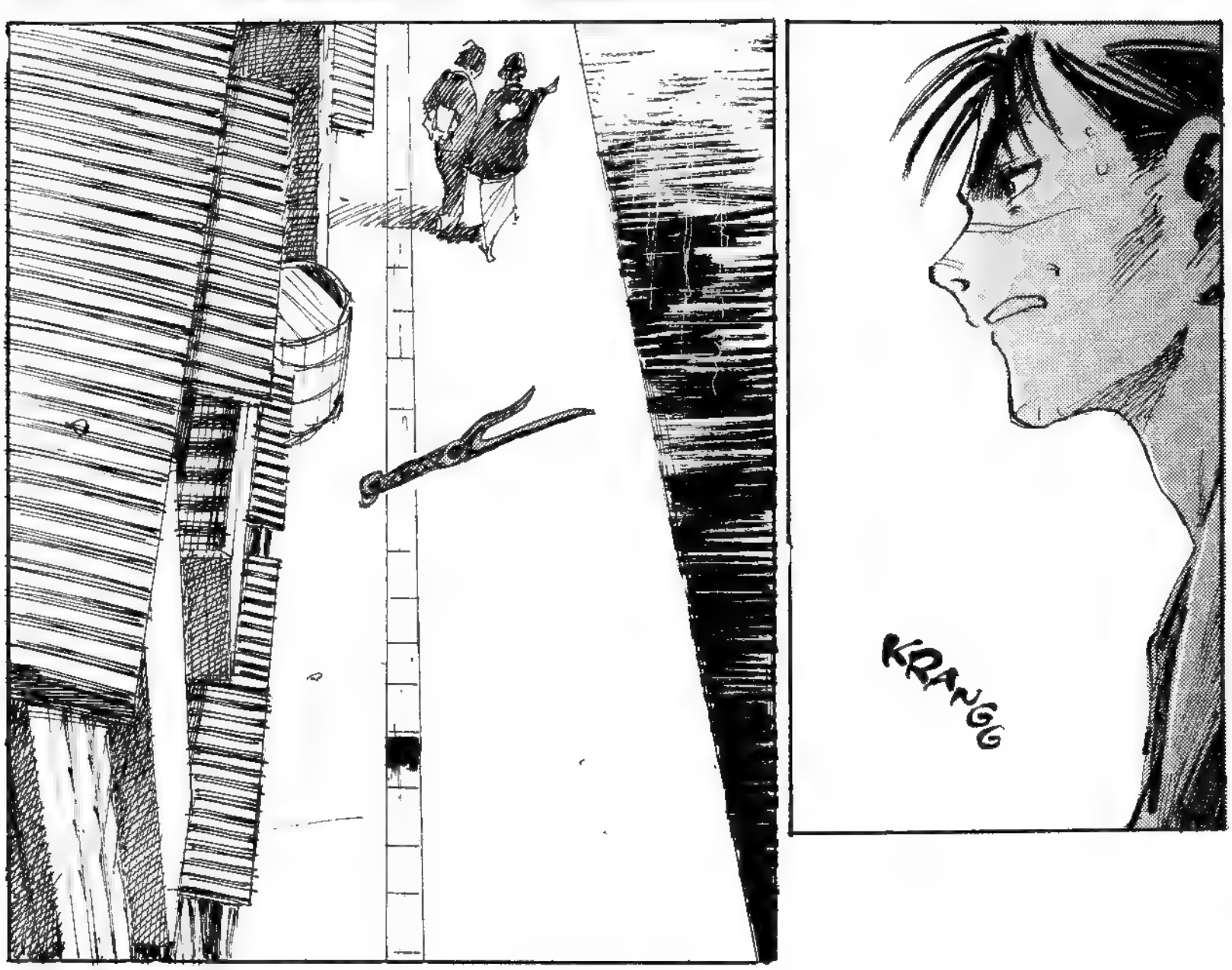


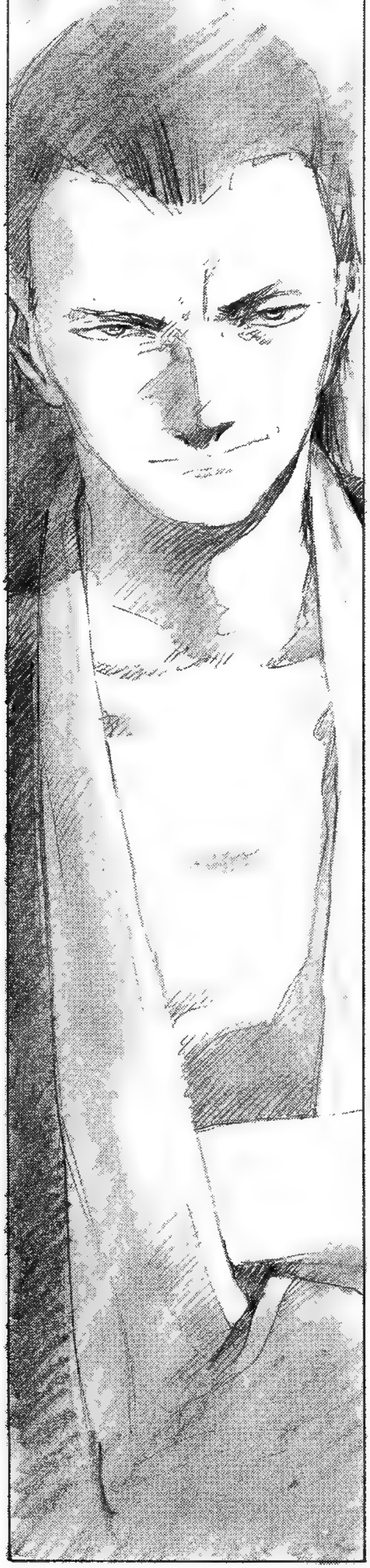
AGAIN

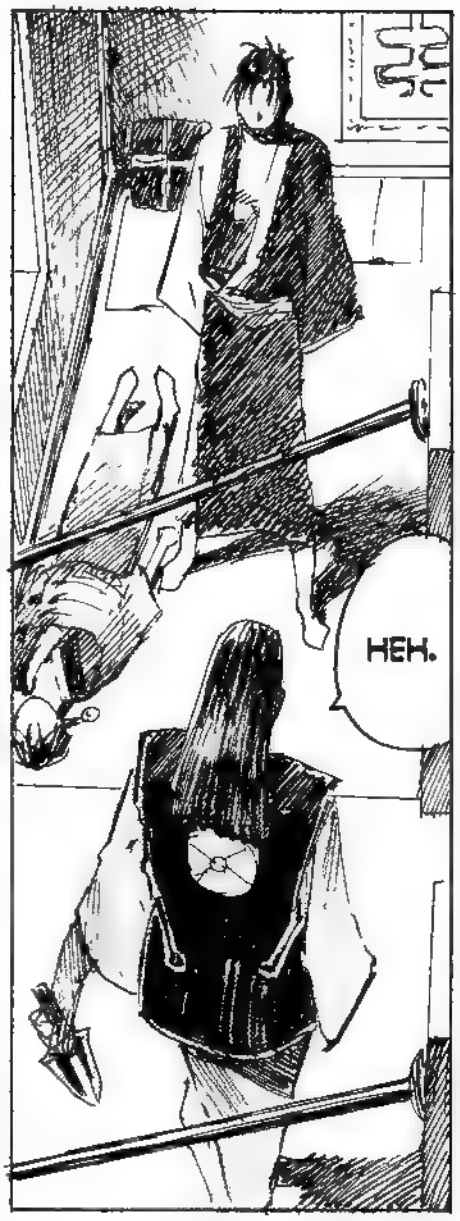
SHI--!

KLAK!

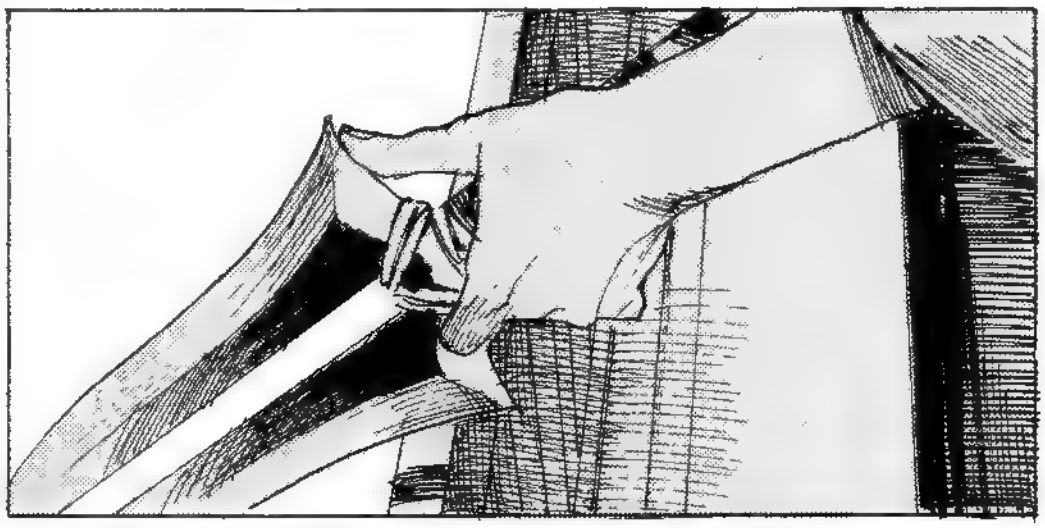
FWAK!
HEY!

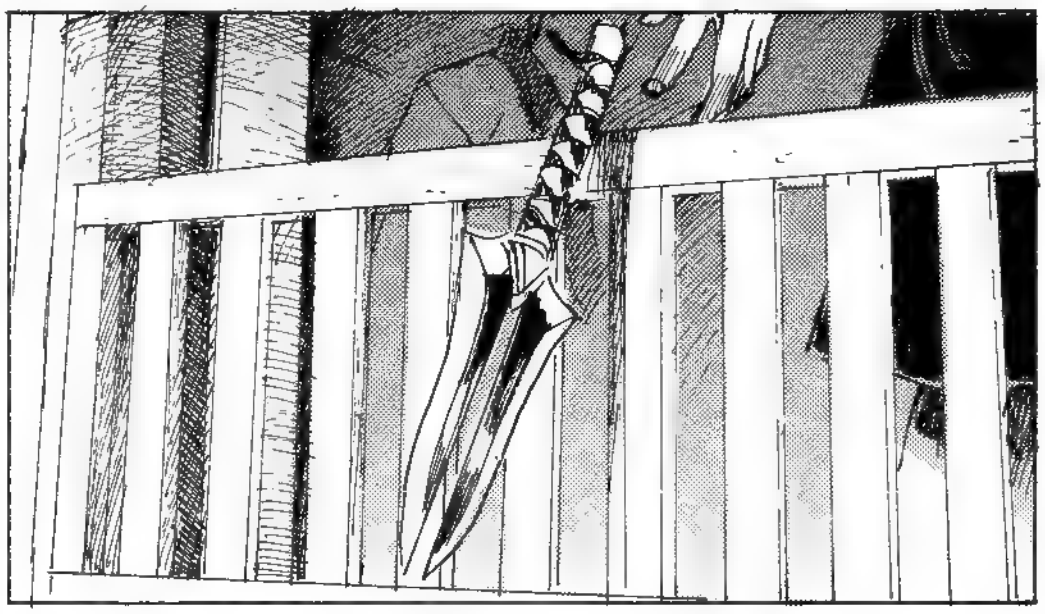

KRANGG

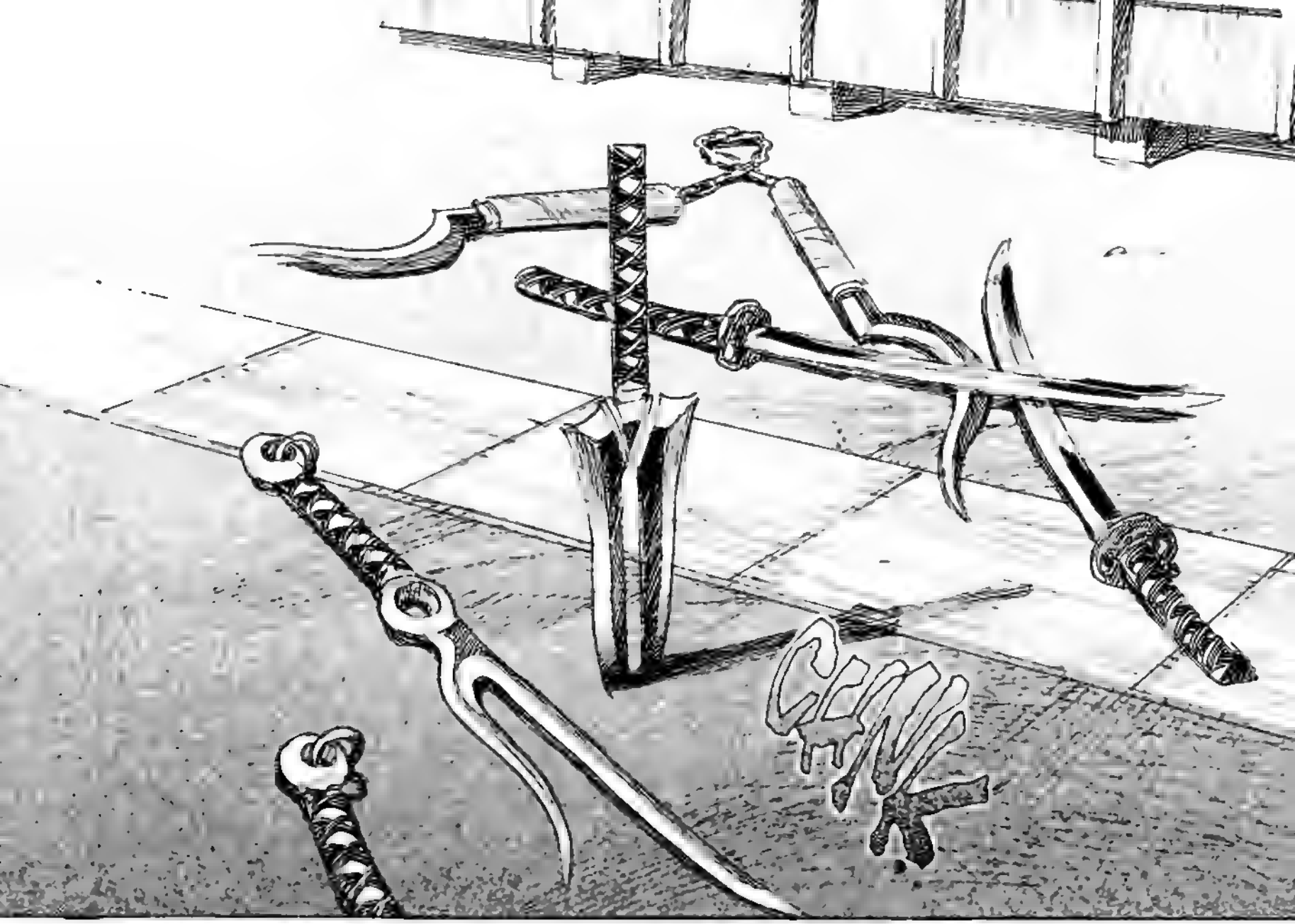



HEH.

SO, HOW MANY YOU GOT LEFT?
THOSE WEAPONS YOU'RE SO PROUD OF...?






CLANG

WHO
THINK
SHIT

I GET THE POINT, ARAYA. IN OTHER WORDS...

...*THIS* IS WHAT YOU WANT ME TO DO.

FAP

MANJI.

YOU GOT A GOOD SWORD ARM...

...BUT YOU'RE JUST LIKE THAT BRAT MAGATSU SAID.

SET UP A TRAP, AND YOU WALK RIGHT INTO IT.

HONEST, UPRIGHT... AND A FOOL.

YOU AND THIS GIRL BOTH.

YOU KNOW, FOR ME...

...THIS LIFE I'M LIVING IS THE REAL ARTIFICE.

ONCE I'VE KILLED YOU AND DUMPED YOUR BODIES IN THE RIVER I CAN ALREADY SEE MYSELF SITTING HERE...

...TELLING MY BOY, "SORRY, SHE WENT HOME." JUST LIKE THAT. WON'T BAT AN EYELASH.

AFTER ALL, IF I DON'T KEEP UP THE LIE...

...I'LL LOSE THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN MY LIFE.

SO I CAN'T LET YOU BEAT ME.

NEVER!

ARAYA...

TING

KRYGG

SKIP YOUR LITTLE TRICKS.

WE'RE EVEN NOW.

THERE IS A WAY YOU CAN KEEP YOUR MASK ON. EVEN IF THIS LITTLE BRAT'S STILL ALIVE.
JUST ONE WAY.

DO TELL.
TEACH ME, PLEASE.

FOOO

SHZO!

WHOK

KRAK

YOU CHANGE YOUR WEAPONS.

BUT YOU FIGHT THE SAME!

THUK

NNG...!

JUST BECAUSE *YOU* ONLY GOT ONE DAGGER...

...DON'T MEAN THAT'S ALL THE *OTHER* GUY'S GOT.

TANGG

HAH?!

KCHOK

AAG!

HAA!

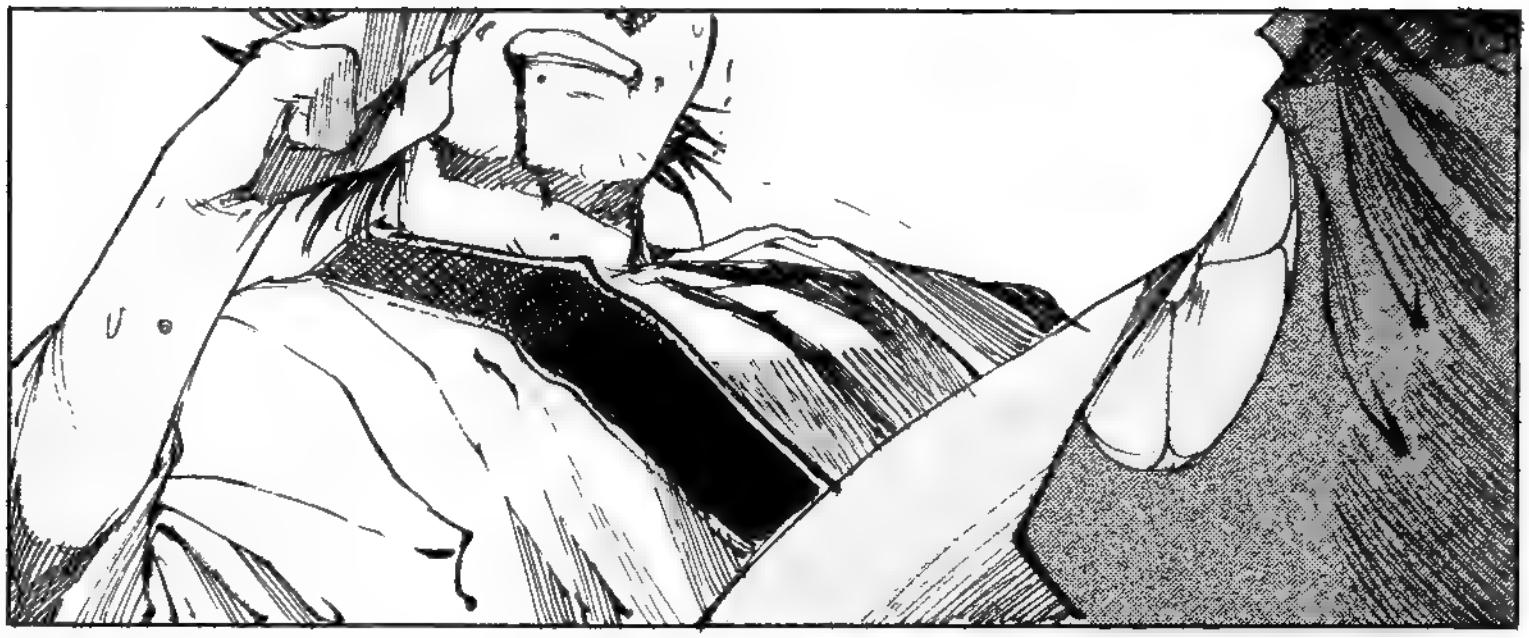
IT SEEMS MY PREDICTION WAS SOMEWHAT INACCURATE.
HOW UNFORTU-NATE...

ON SILENT WINGS

Part 6

I MEAN, WHAT IS THIS CRAP?!

SO WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?

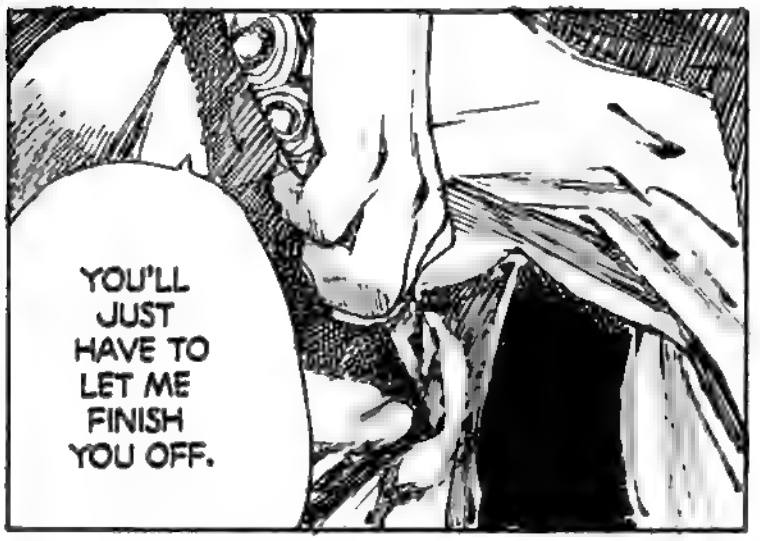


DAMN IT, MANJI!
YOU'RE THE GUY WHO KILLED TEN ITTO-RYŌ KENSHI.
NO WAY YOU'RE WEAKER THAN ME!

WELL, SHIT.
YOU TWO REALLY ARE ALIKE.

AHEM

SORRY, MY FRIEND.
BUT I'M OUT OF TIME.


YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO LET ME FINISH YOU OFF.

HNG...!

AND NOW... DIE!!

Wham!

gasp
hff
nf
hah!
hghh

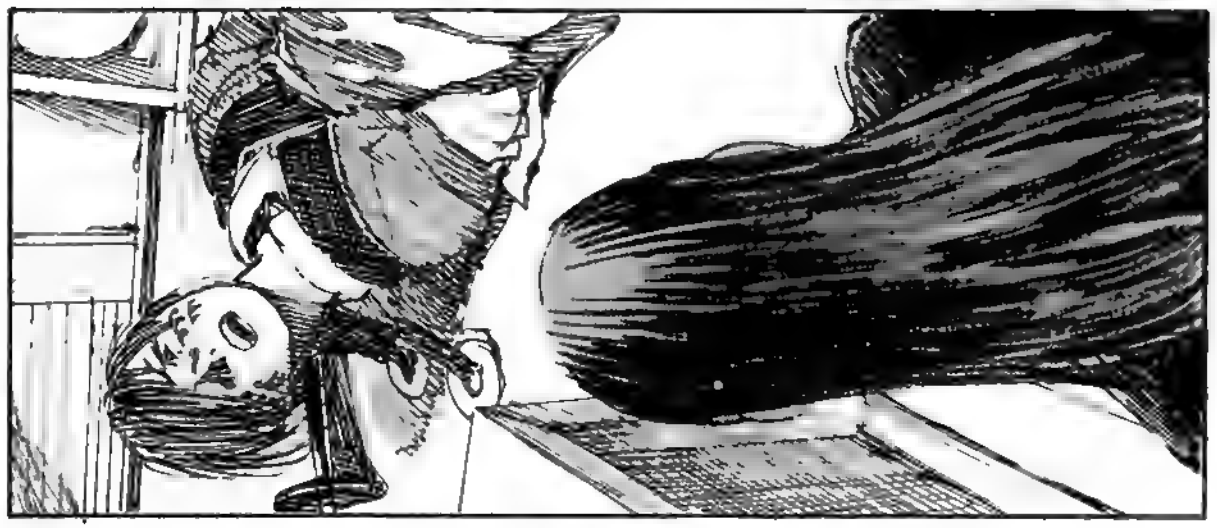
whew

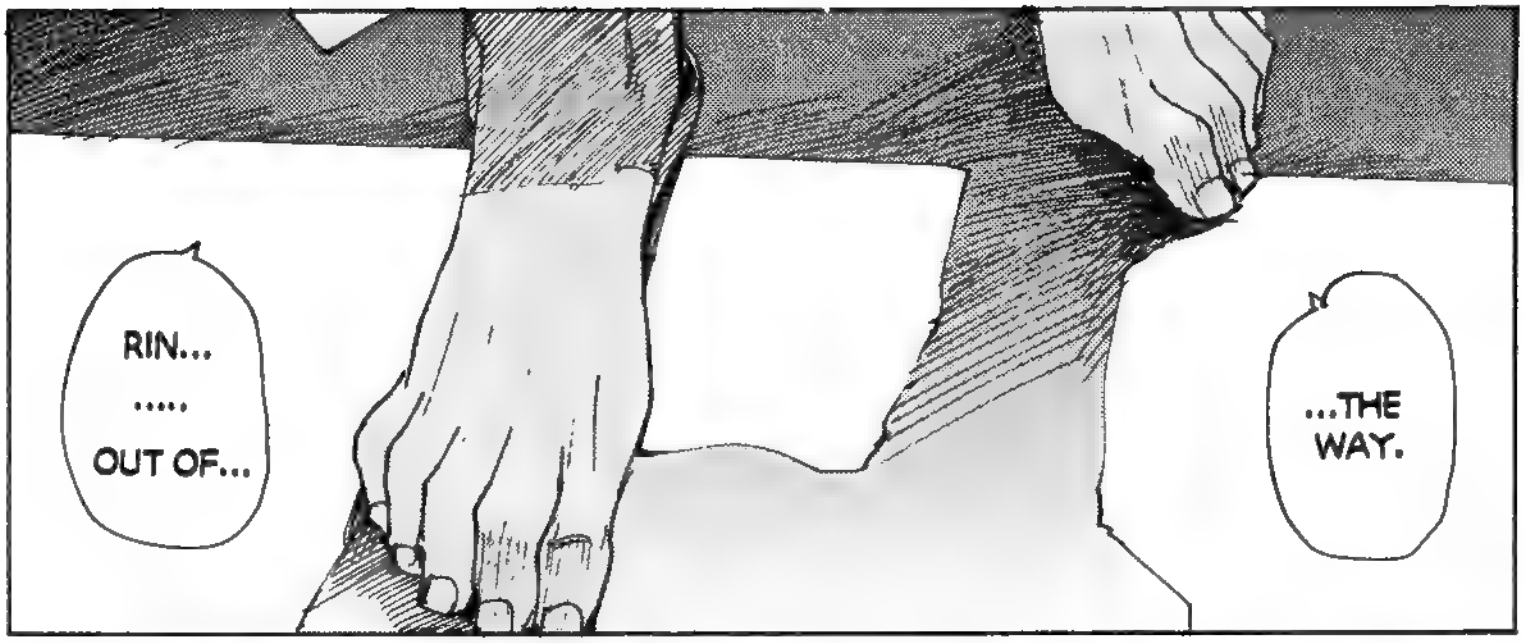
.....
.....

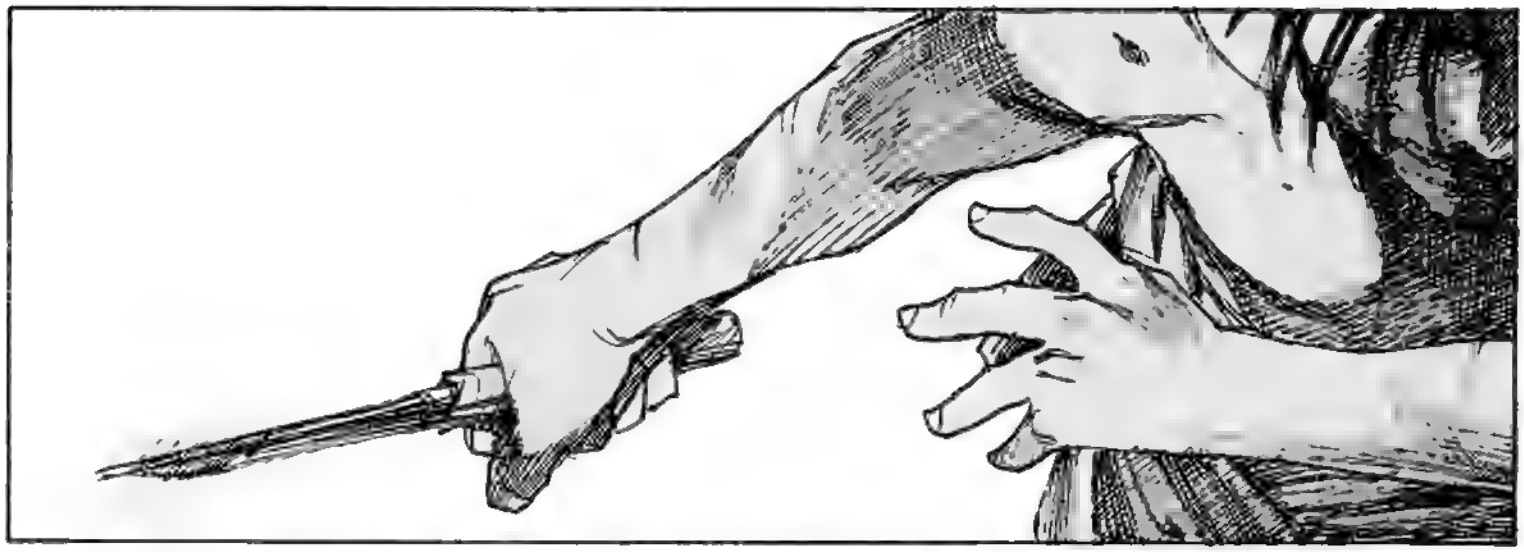
MANJI ...?!

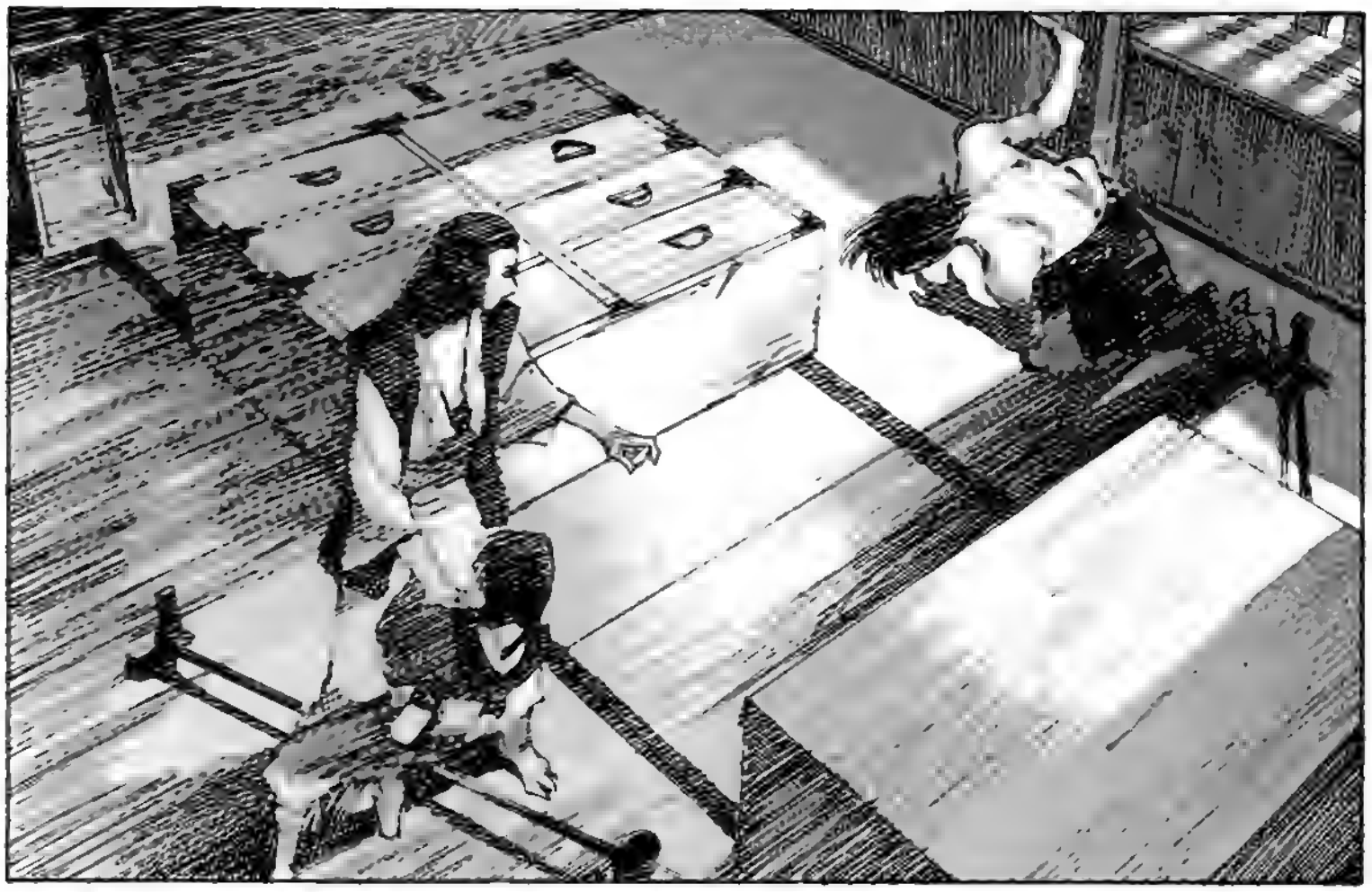
AA...!

....
...!




RIN...
.....
OUT OF...
...THE
WAY.

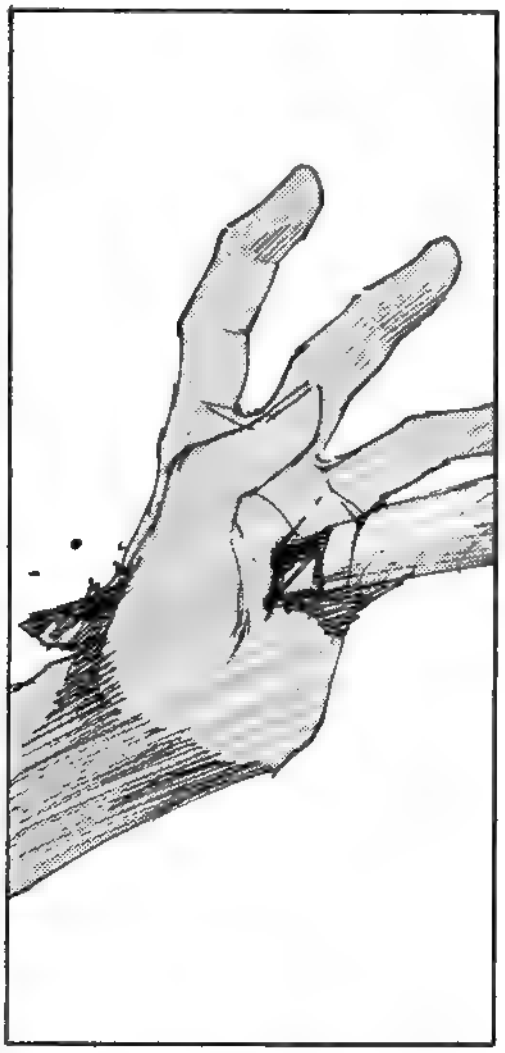


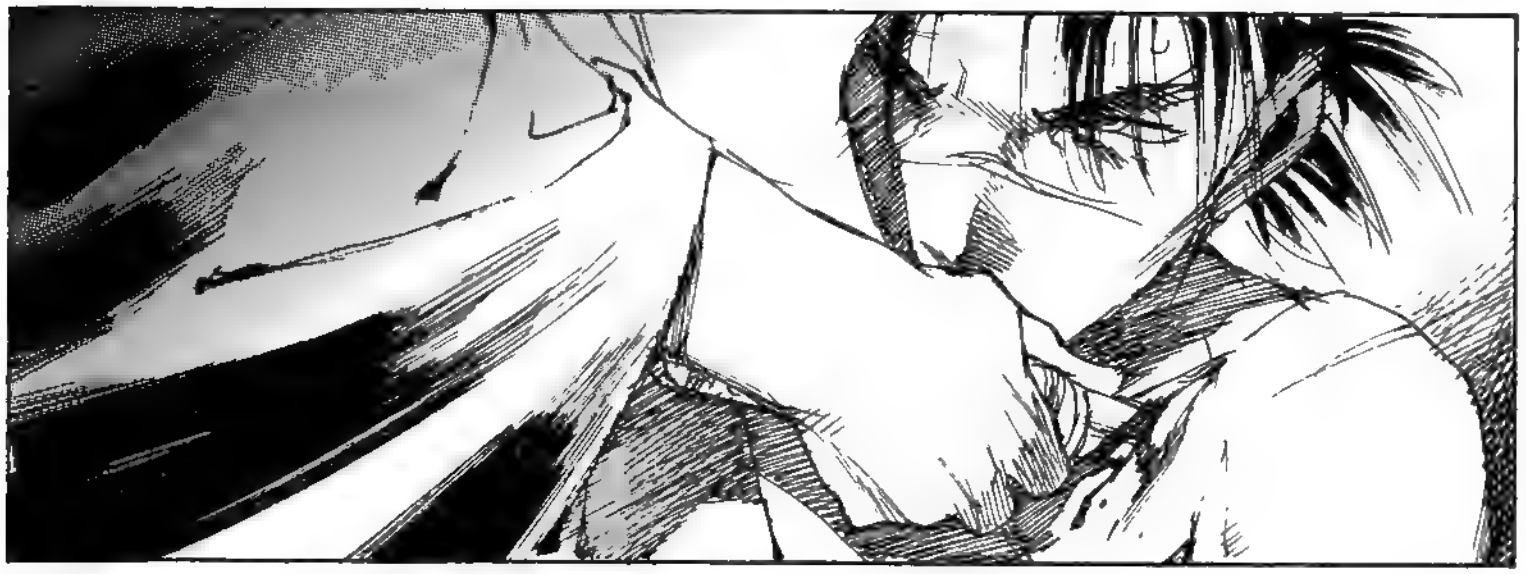


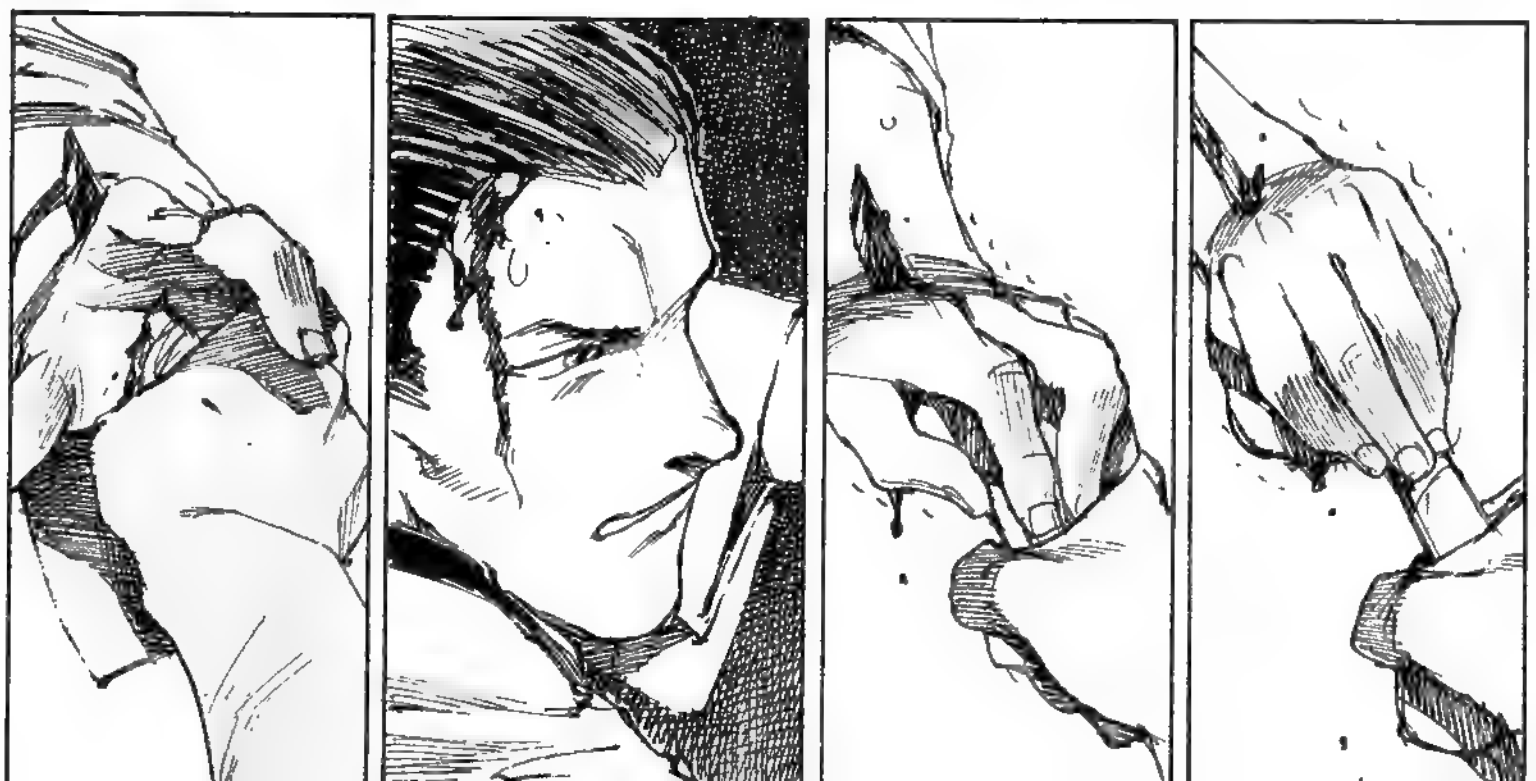
AAH!

WHO

THUK





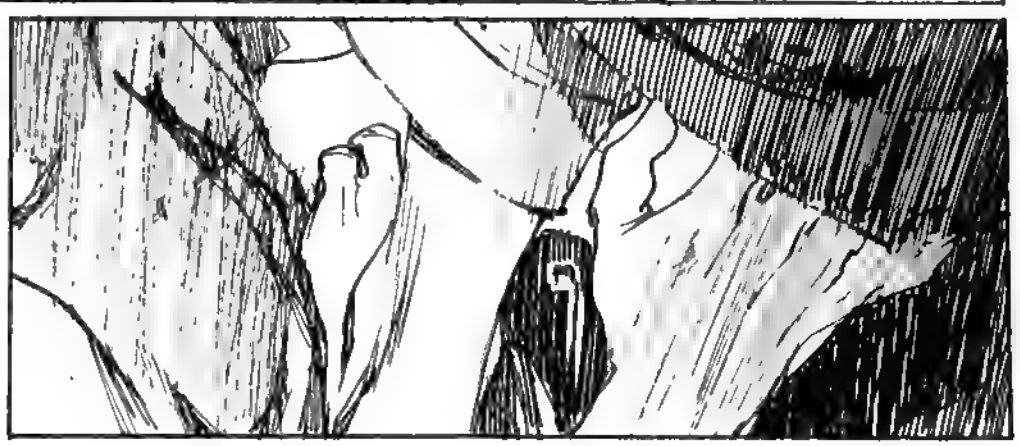


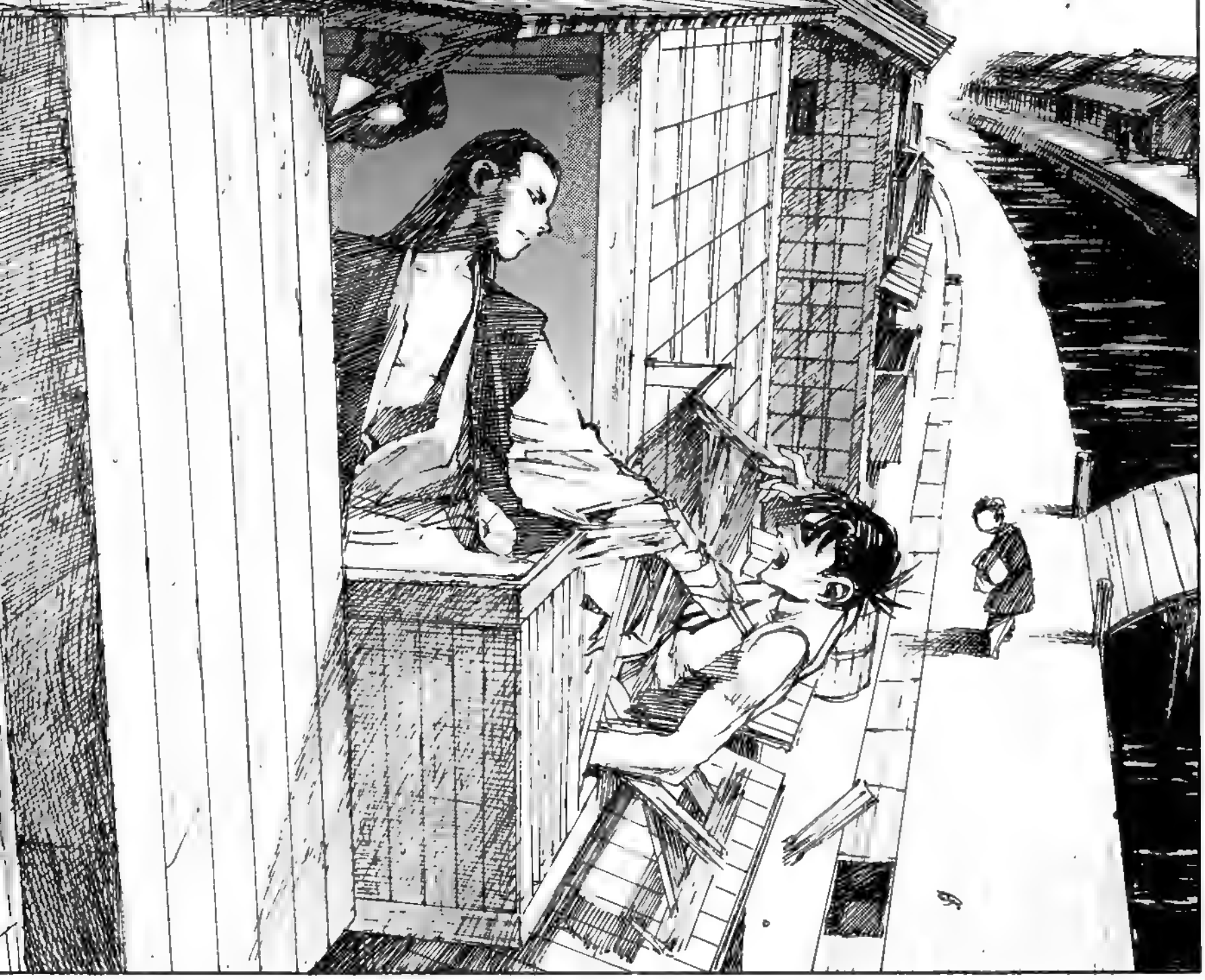
FREAK

NNG...!

NO MORE KNIVES...?

WHAT A SHAME.





はぁ!?

AND NOW, GOOD SIR...

...MY FINISH-ING TOUCH.

MANJI!

RUD

.....
.....
HOW...
.....
.....
WHERE...?

WELL, ARAYA...

I FINALLY GOT WITH THE PROGRAM.

I KNOW HOW YOU DON'T GIVE A DAMN HOW DIRTY YOU FIGHT?

HEH... SORRY IF IT LOOKS LIKE I TRICKED YOU.

THAT'S THE BLADE I USED TO GET UP TO YOUR ROOM.

I LOOKED OVER AND THERE IT WAS, STILL STUCK IN THE WALL.

BUT I GOTTA TELL YA... I'D COMPLETELY BLANKED ON IT.

HEH...
HA
HA
HA!

...THE
BREAKS.
WELL...
THEM'S...

koff
hahh

AH,
HA.

huff

YOU GOT A DAMN GOOD *YOJIMBO.*

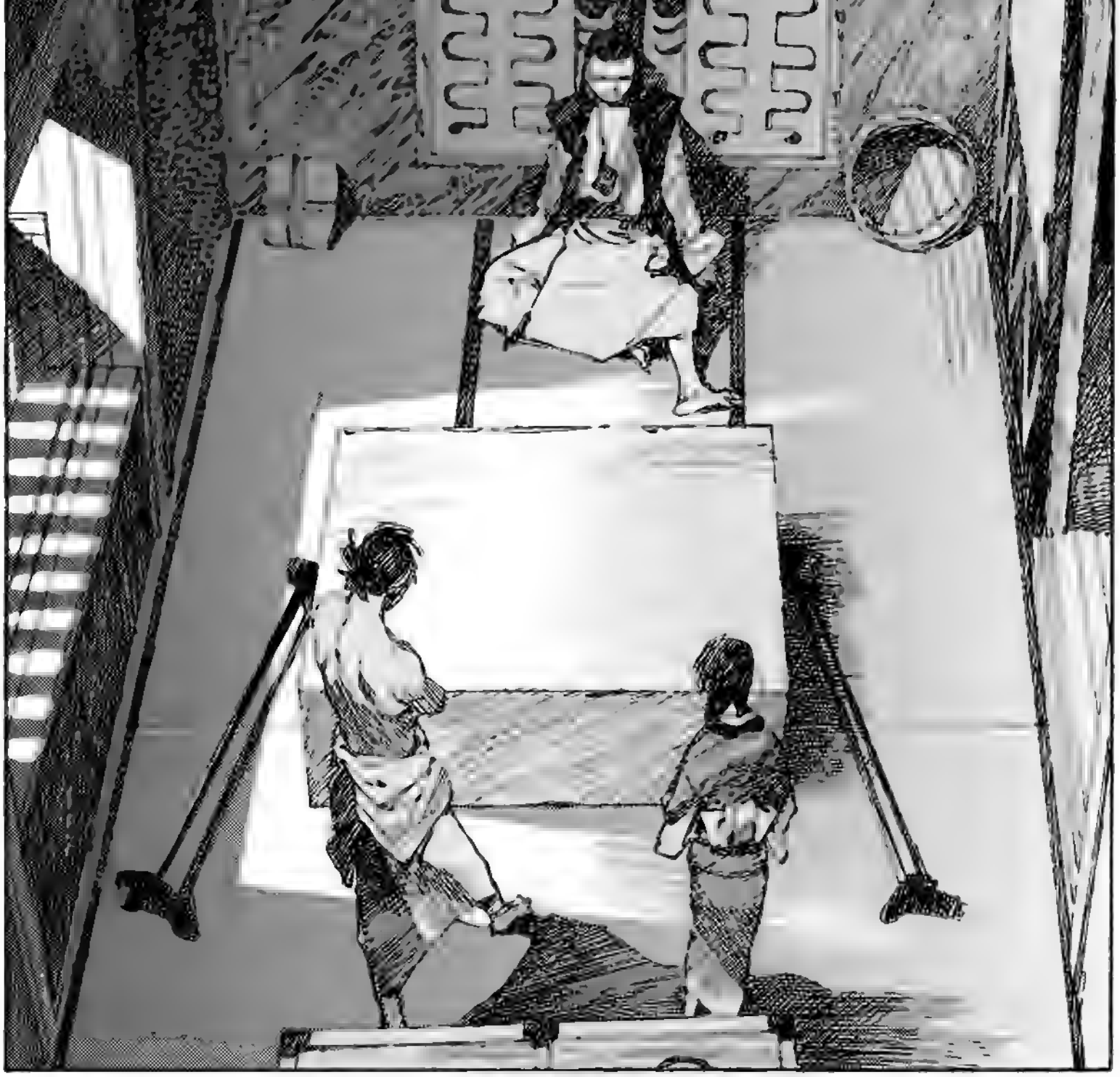
LITTLE LADY...?

FWAK

....

...!

KILL ME.



GO ON... IT'S YOUR FIGHT.
DON'T BE SHY...

...
...

B-
BUT...

I...
I
DIDN'T...

I
DIDN'T
COME
HERE
TO KILL
YOU.

MANJI,
MY
FRIEND.

DON'T
LEAVE ME
LIKE THIS.
I CAN'T
FACE MY
BOY.

SO... YOU'LL DO ME... ONE LAST FAVOR, YES...?

NO... NO!!

MANJI!

I DON'T NEED THIS!

LET THEM SAY I'M A COWARD. LET THEM SAY I WON'T GET MY HANDS DIRTY! I DON'T CARE!

IF YOU DO THIS...

JUST PLEASE... STOP.

...IT'LL BE JUST THE SAME AS... THAT NIGHT.

PLEASE!!

AAH!

SSH

CHOK

SPLIT

SORRY...

SO...

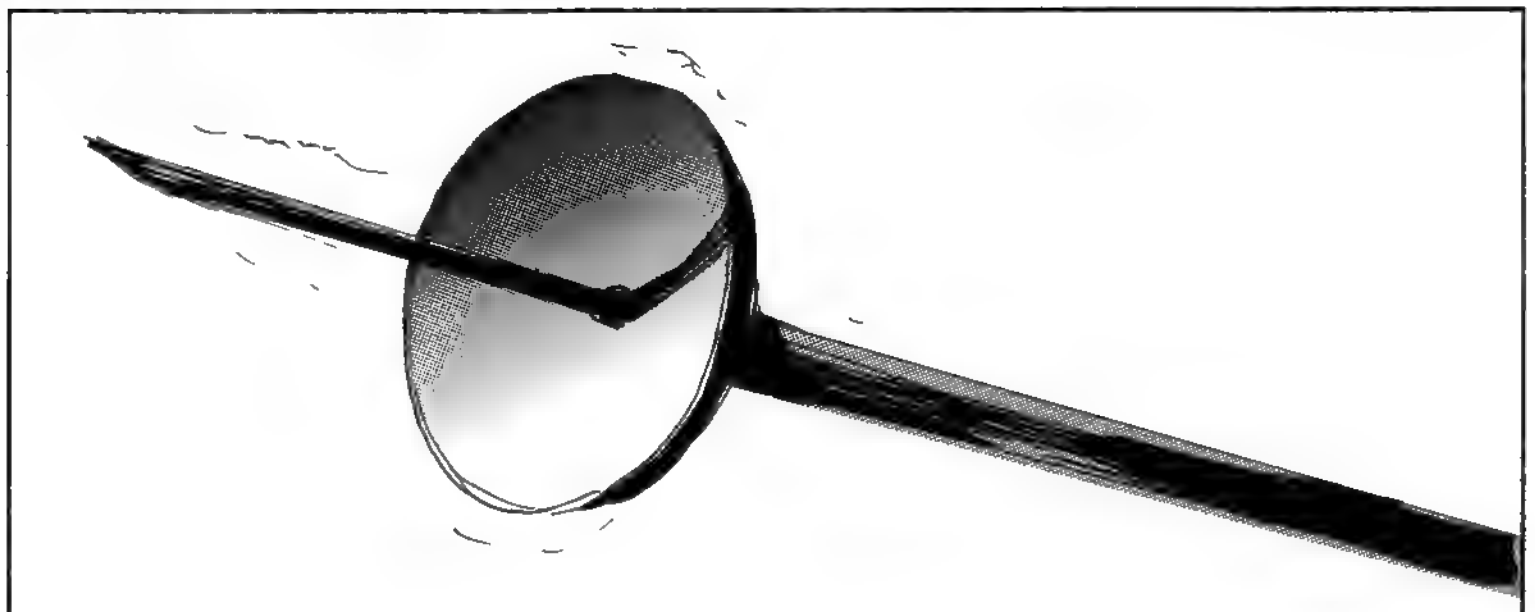
HEY THERE, KID.

ON SILENT WINGS

Part 7

WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?

THIS SCUM-BAG'S KID...?



=haah=
HNNG!

WELL, SHIT.
JUST A STUPID KID...

...BUT NOW THAT YOU'VE SEEN ME...

...GUESS I CAN'T LET YOU LIVE, EH?

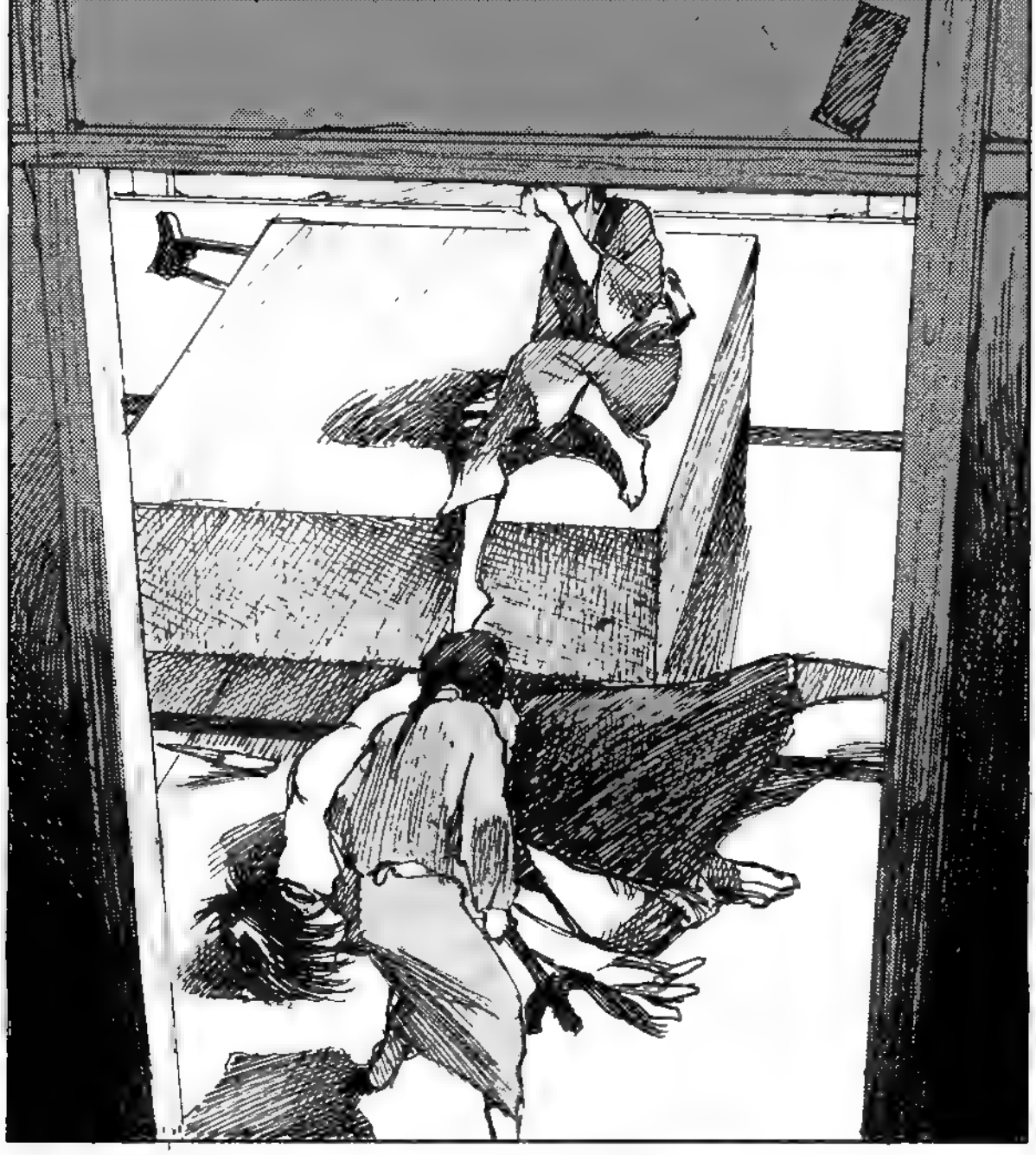
IF YOU CAN HANDLE IT...

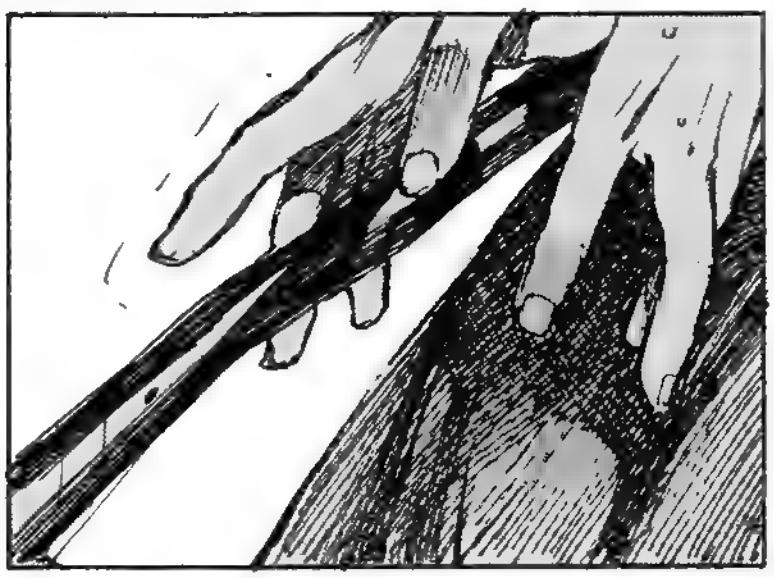
PUNK.

...I CAN SEND YOU TO MEET YOUR DADDY.

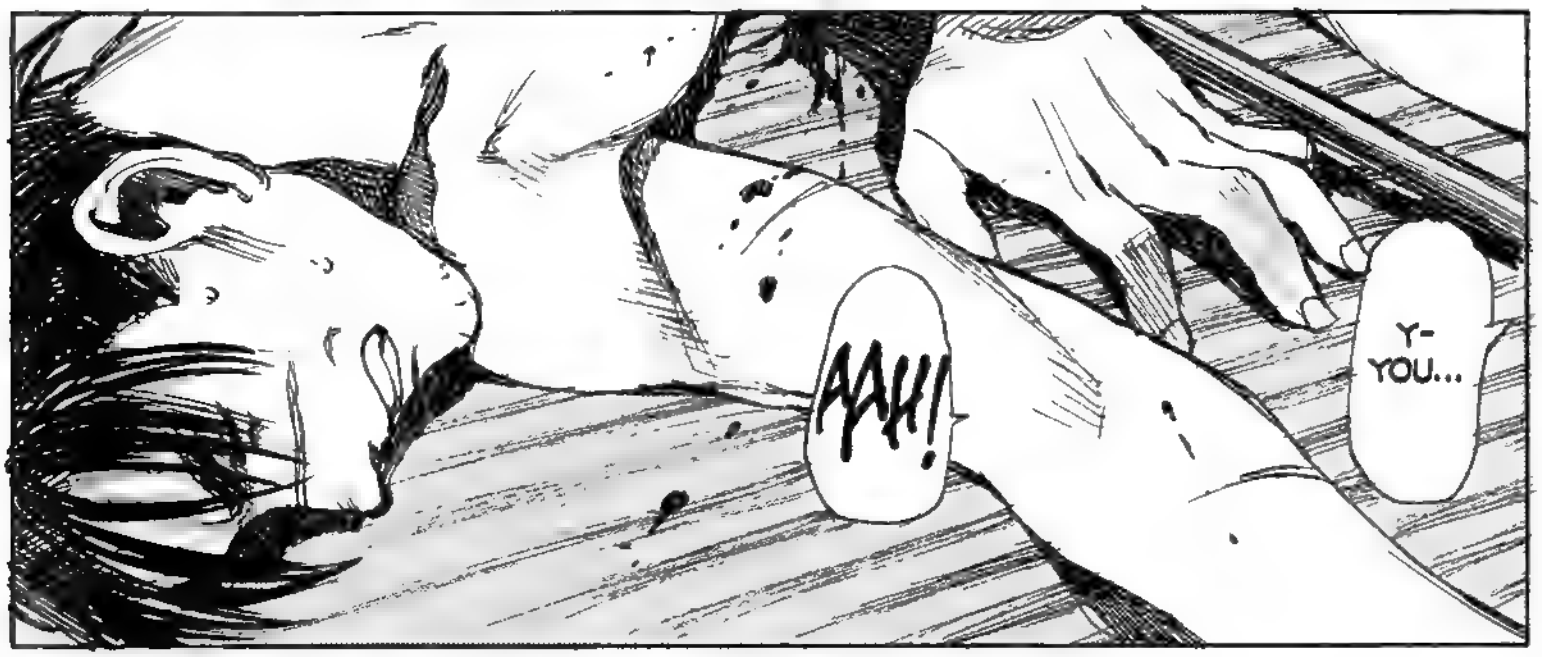
Ah...!

RAAA





NNG...


AAH!
Y-
YOU...

WHO THE...

SHIT...

WH-
WHY?!
WHY DID YOU DO IT?!

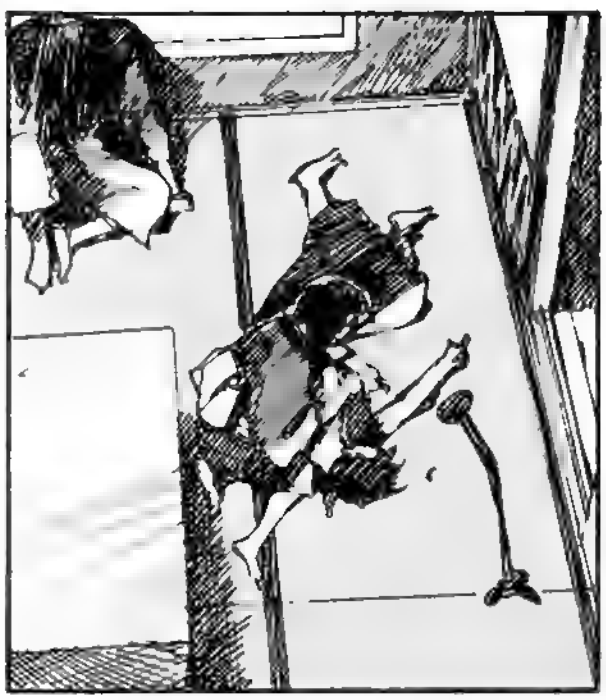
Y-YOU ROTTEN BASTARD!!

KRAK

AAAH!!

FWAAM

THD THD THD THD THD



SAY...
MANJI...

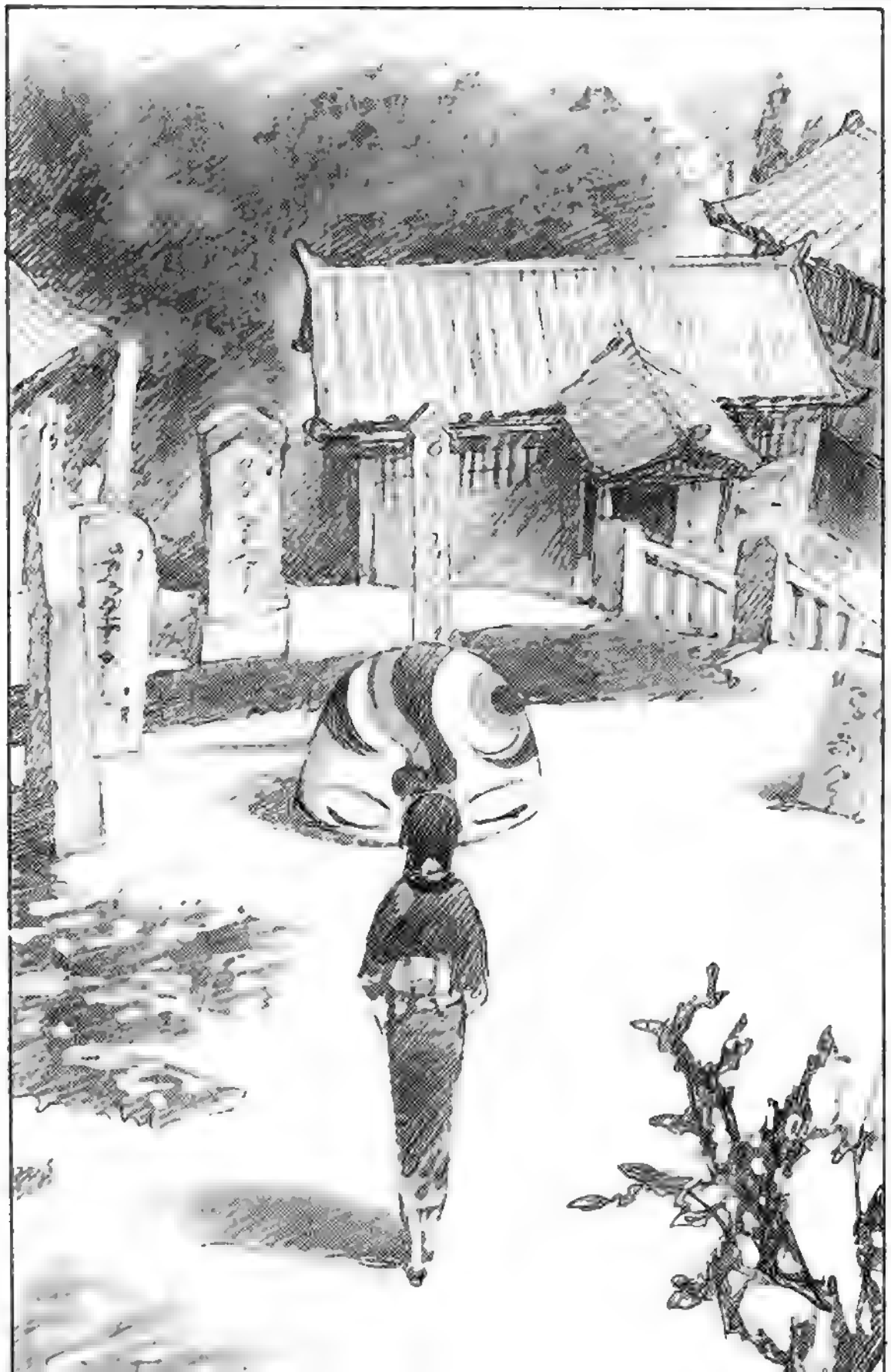
WHEN PEOPLE HATE, IS THIS HOW IT HAS TO BE?

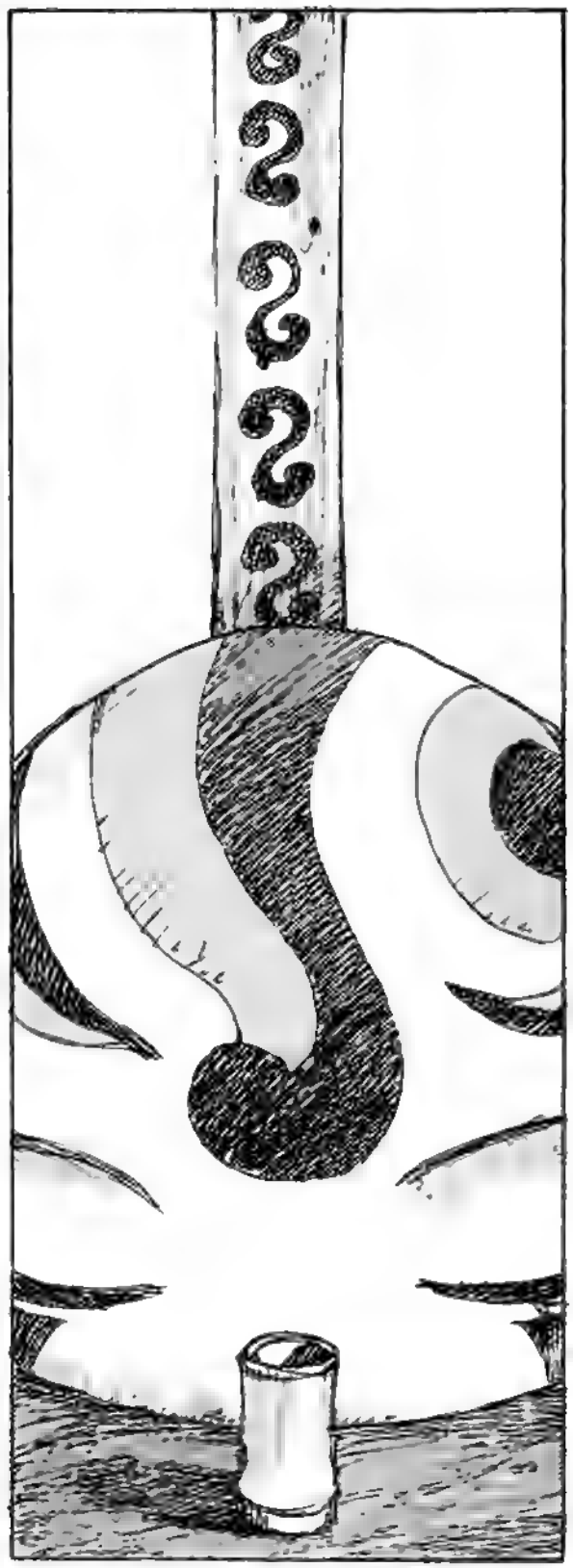
DOESN'T IT EVER STOP UNTIL SOME-ONE'S DEAD?

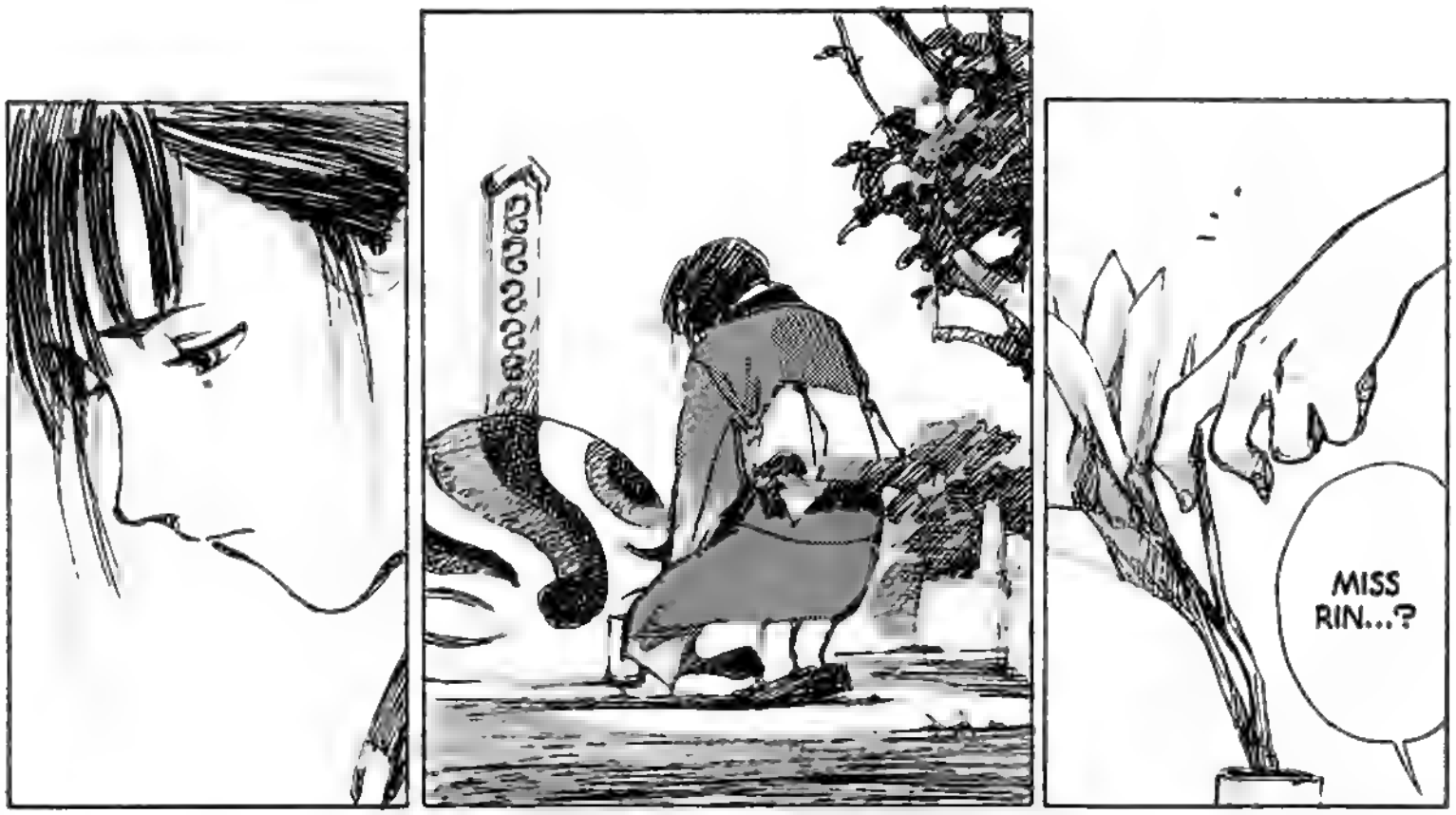
YA DUMB KID...

IT DOESN'T STOP EVEN *WHEN* SOMEONE DIES.

NOT... REALLY...






MISS RIN...?

リン

IT'S SUCH A SWEET TOMB-STONE.

YEAH, WELL... I CAN'T WRITE OR NOTHING.

AND I COULDN'T AFFORD A REAL STONE ONE.

I SEE. BUT, YOU KNOW...

...THIS WAY IT REALLY FEELS LIKE YOUR DAD'S SLEEPING HERE.

YEAH... ....

KNOW WHAT?

I'M HITTING THE ROAD TOMOR-ROW.

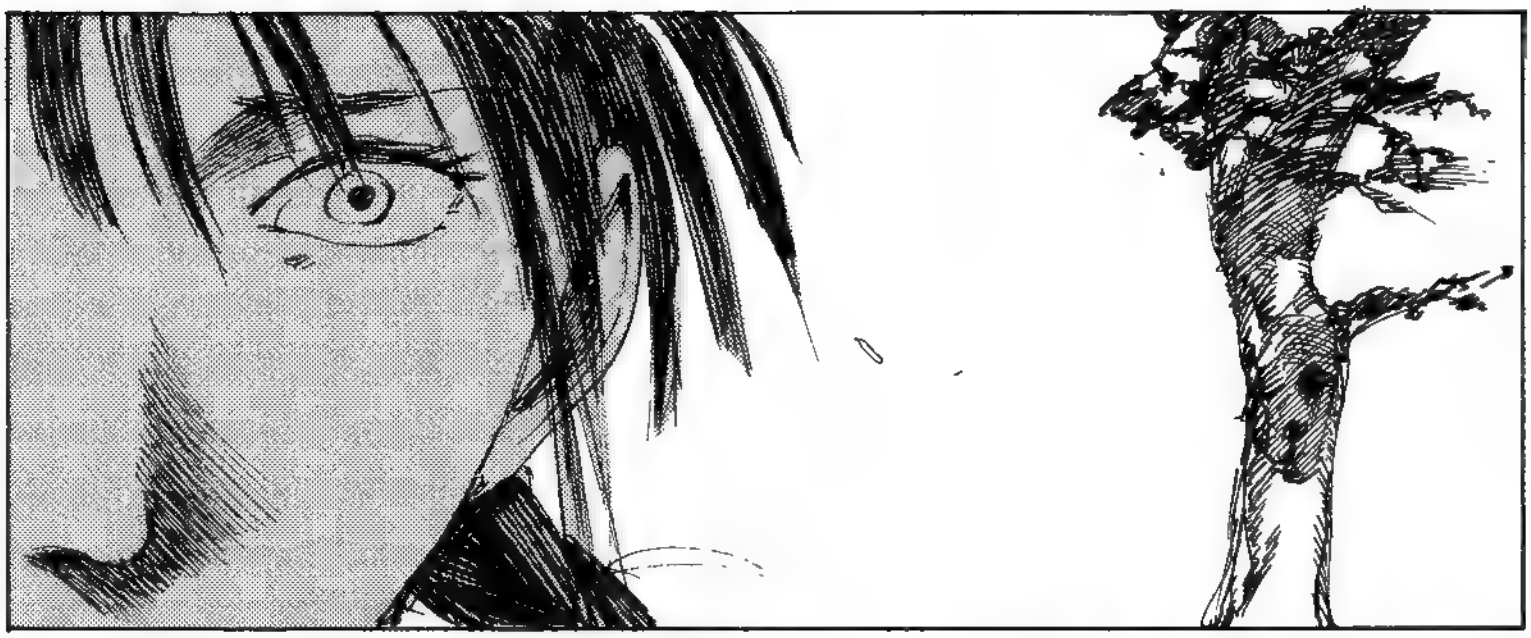
EH...?

THREE DAYS AGO... WHEN I WENT BACK TO THAT ROOM...

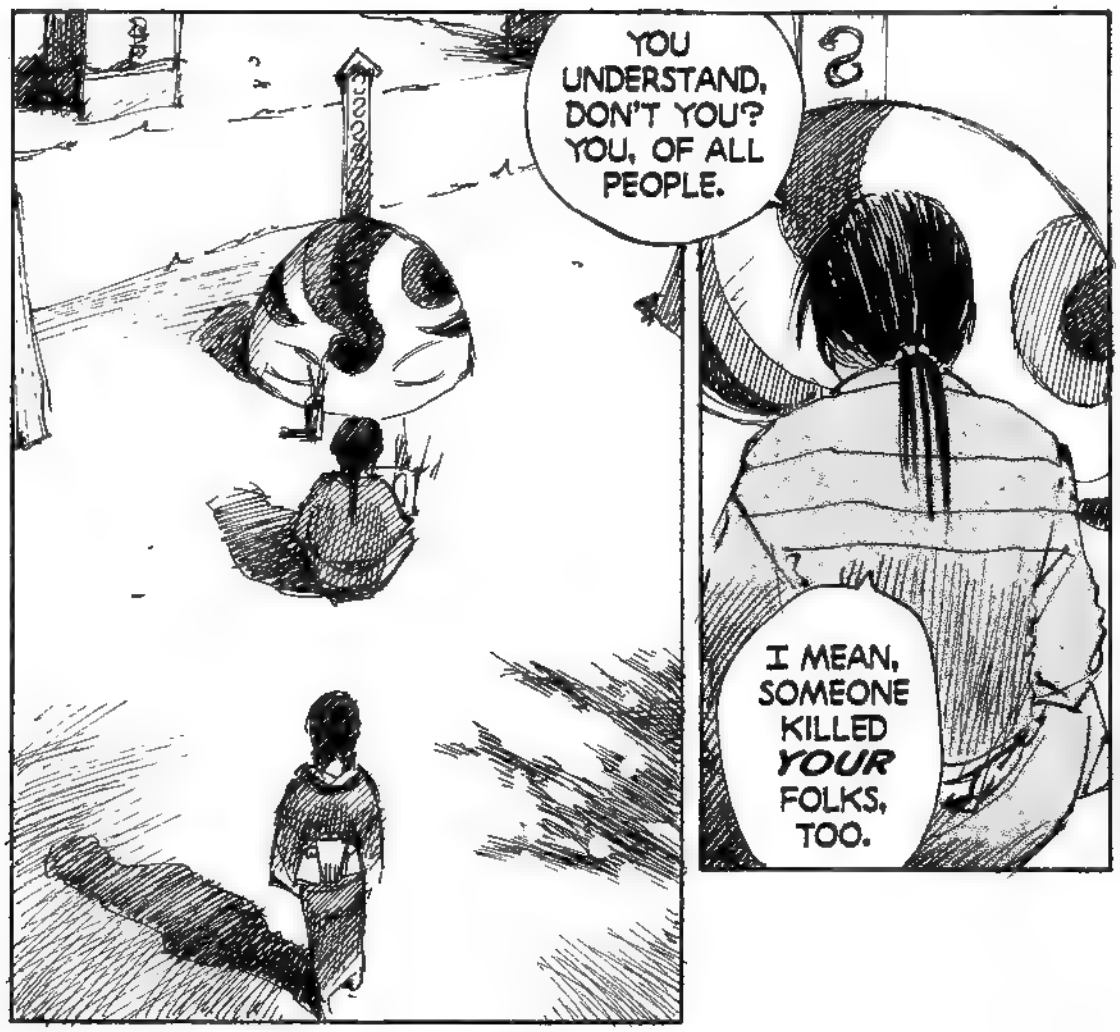
...TO TAKE CARE OF MY DAD'S BODY...

HE WAS GONE.

I MEAN THAT GUY-- ***HIS*** BODY WAS GONE.



SO THAT BASTARD'S STILL ALIVE OUT THERE, SOME-WHERE.
AND SO...


YOU UNDERSTAND, DON'T YOU? YOU, OF ALL PEOPLE.

I MEAN, SOMEONE KILLED *YOUR* FOLKS, TOO.

MM.
YES...

UM...

YOU DIDN'T EVEN KNOW ME BEFORE ALL OF THIS HAPPENED.

I GUESS I'VE MADE A LOT OF TROUBLE FOR YOU.

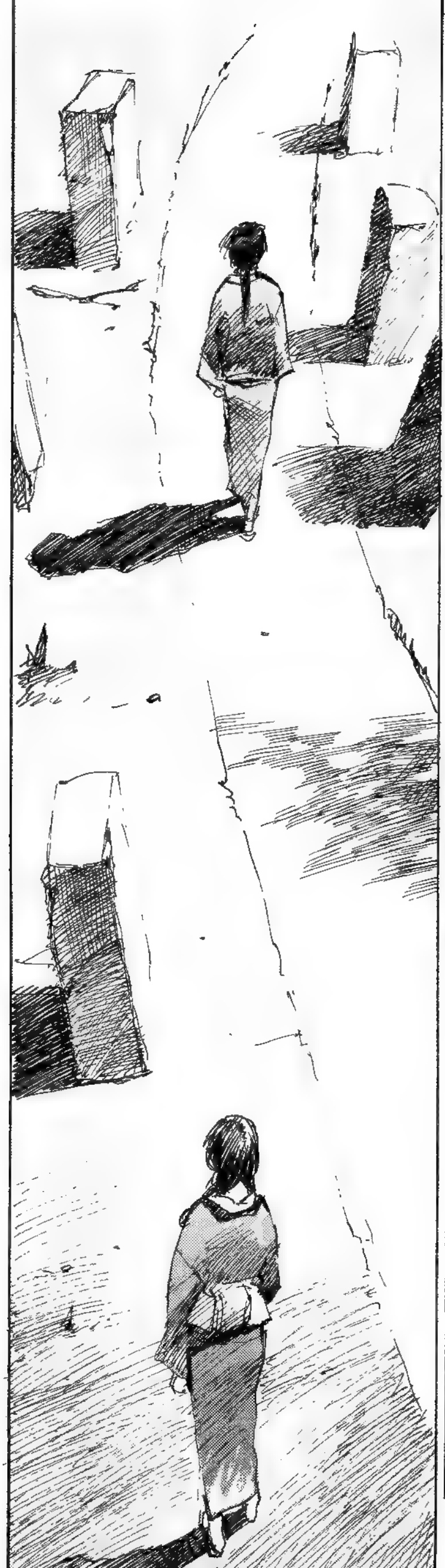
NO... NOT REALLY.

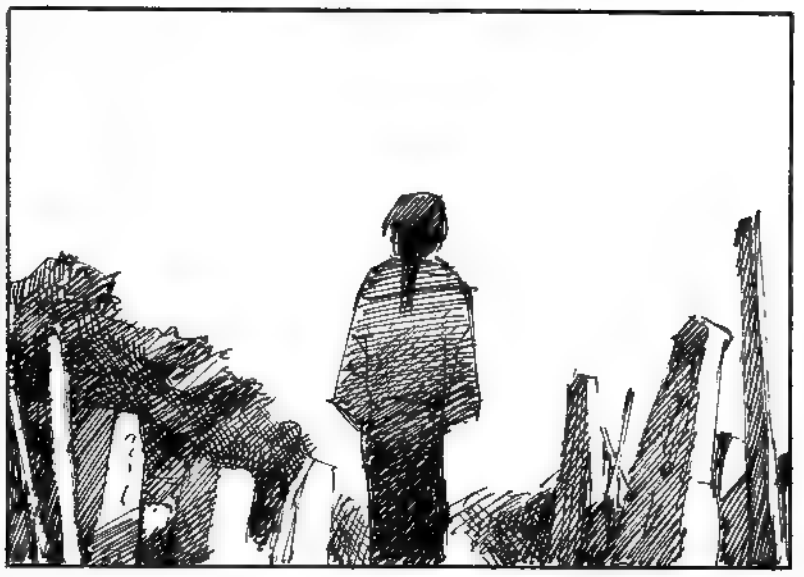
I'M OKAY.

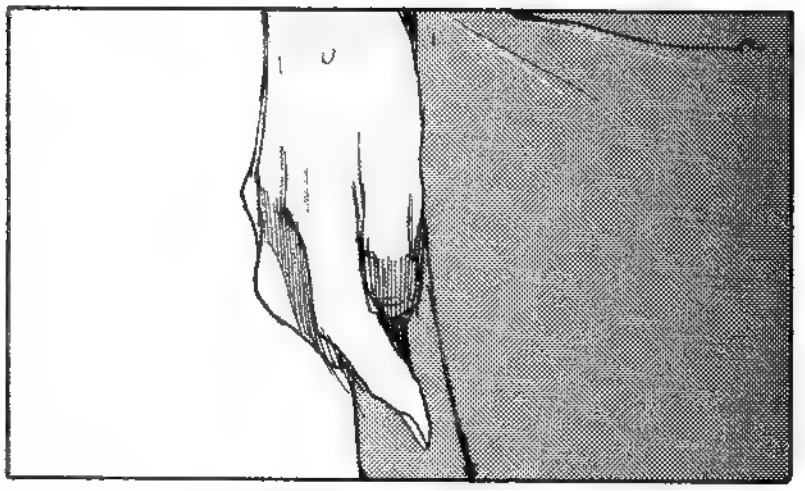
YOU KNOW...

...IF WE MEET AGAIN SOMEDAY... ONCE WE'VE DONE WHAT WE GOTTA DO... AND IF WE'RE BOTH STILL ALIVE... I OWE YA ONE, OKAY?

SEE YA.







NO,
WAIT...

RENZO!

YOU'RE BEING JUST AS FOOLISH AS THE REST OF THEM.

JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS ABOUT HIM BEING ALIVE.

THAT MAN IS *DEAD.*

I BURIED HIM.

IT'S TRUE... REALLY.

MAYBE IT WAS NONE OF MY BUSINESS.

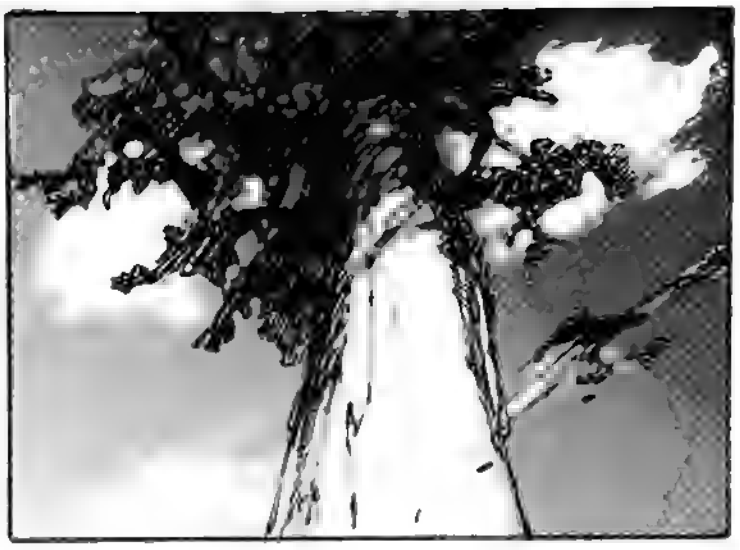
BUT I THOUGHT... MAKING YOU CLEAN UP...

I MEAN, HAVING TO TAKE CARE OF HIM, TOO... I JUST COULDN'T.

WHERE IS HE?

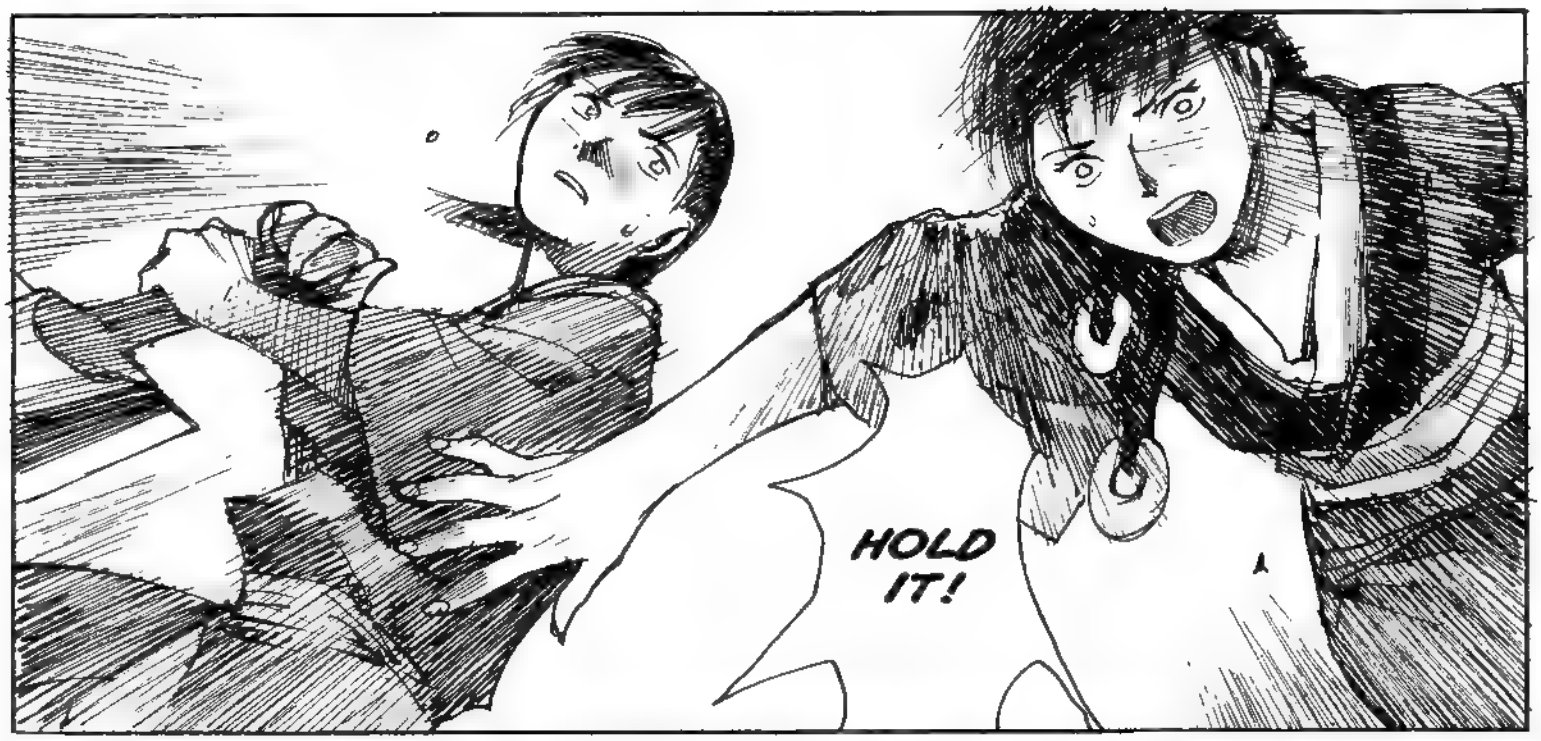
ALL RIGHT.

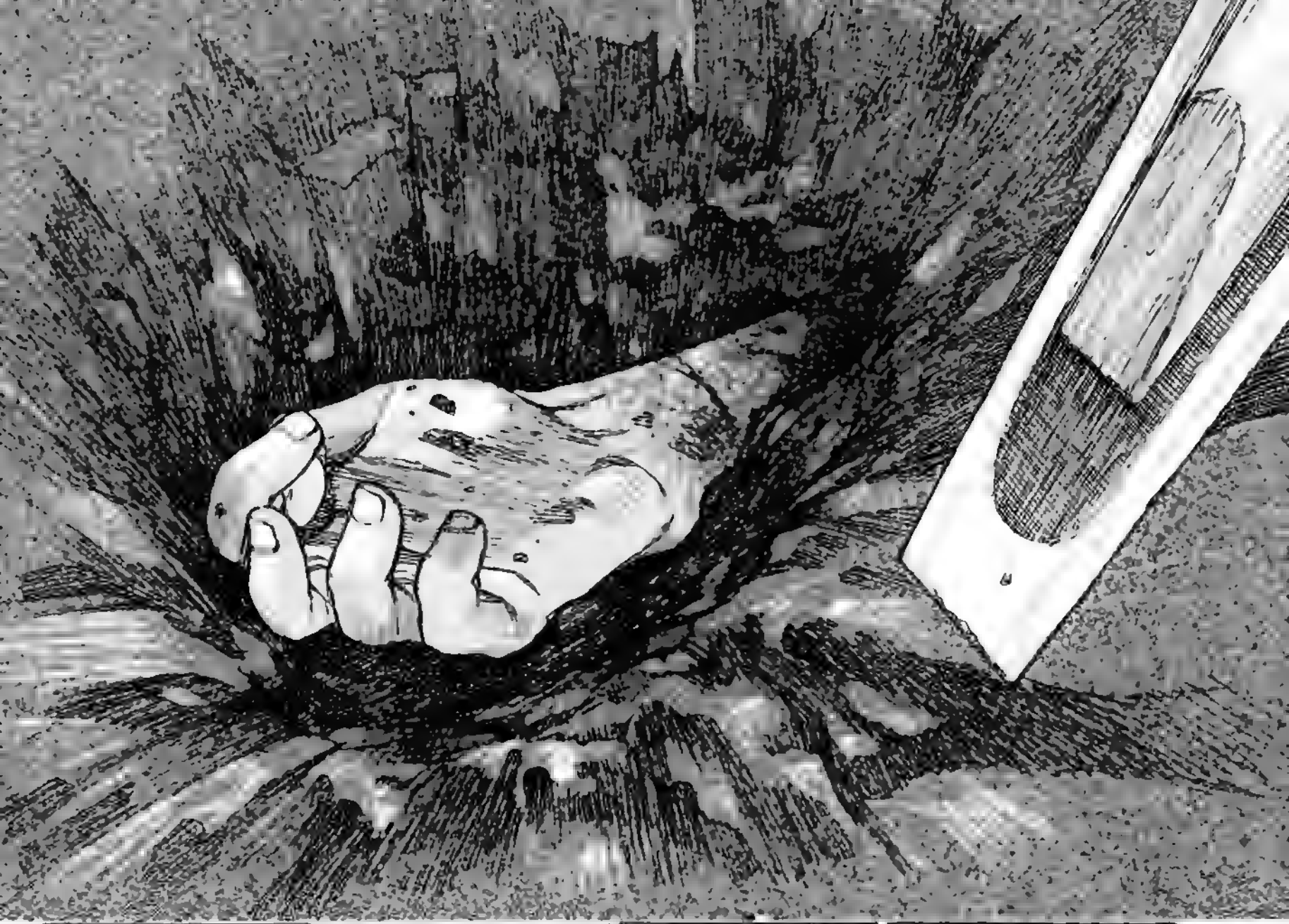
GO BORROW SOME SHOVELS. I'LL HELP.

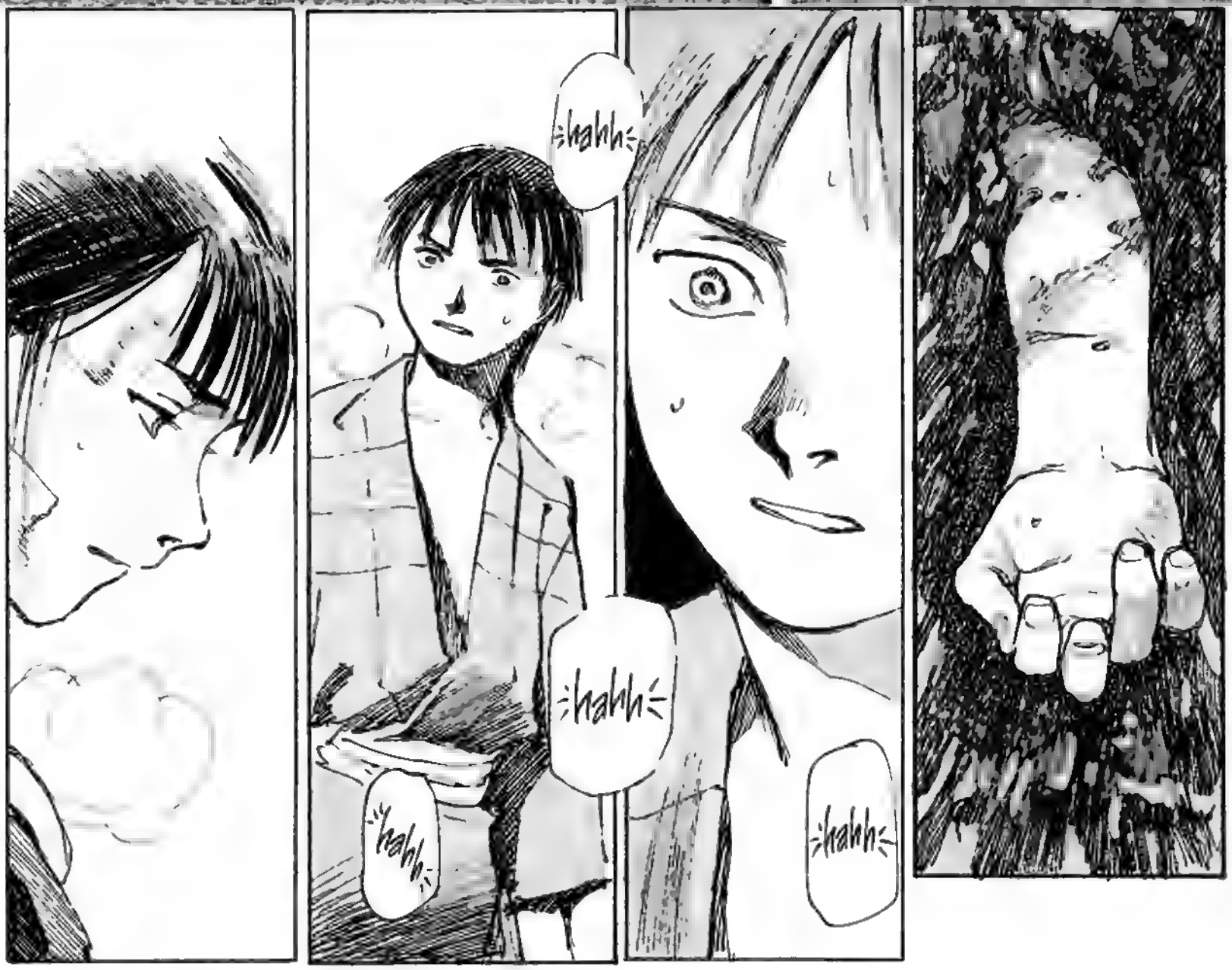


SHKK

CHNK


HOLD IT!




:hahh:
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LOOK... RENZO...

I... I DON'T KNOW HOW TO SAY THIS.

BUT... SOMETIMES I THINK THAT EVERY FATHER, EVERY-WHERE...

...HAS SOME DEEP SECRET HE CAN'T TELL HIS CHILD.

SO, FOR THAT CHILD... EVEN IF SOMETHING HAPPENS THAT DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE TO HIM...

EVEN IF HE NEVER KNOWS WHY IT HAPPENED, AT LEAST HE'LL BE FREE OF THE BURDEN OF HATE.

DO YOU KNOW HOW MUCH EASIER THAT CAN BE? TO LIVE WITHOUT HATE?

D-
DAMN
IT...

GOD
DAMN
IT!!

DADDY...
.....

I'M SORRY, RENZO... I AM SO, **SO** SORRY...

MANJI...?

YEAH?

HE SAID "SORRY," RIGHT? AT THE END.

ARAYA...

I DUNNO...

NOT LIKE HE APOL-OGIZED TO US.

.....
.....

ON THE OTHER HAND...

"HONEST FOLK ARE FOOLS."

I SEEM TO REMEMBER HIM SAYING THAT ABOUT US, TOO...

READY TO GO?

UH-HUH.

?

MAN, YOU *DO* WASTE MONEY ON THE STUPIDEST THINGS.

OH, THOSE...? um, ON FESTIVAL DAY, I--

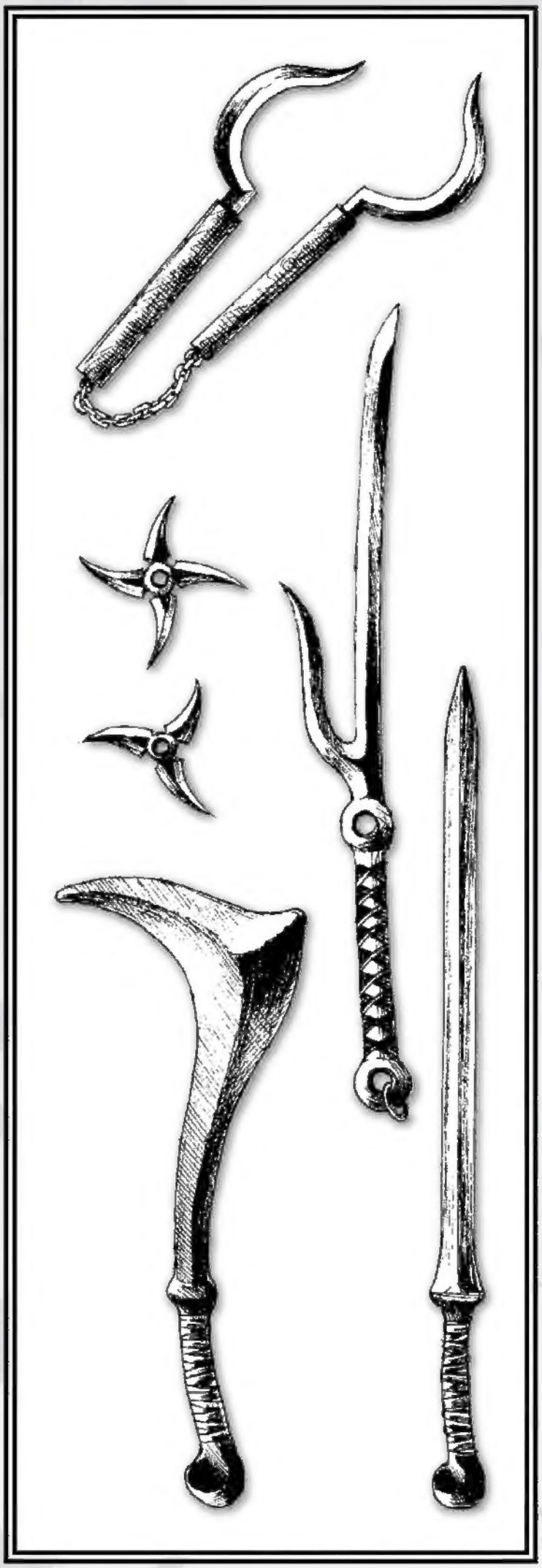
THEY'RE PRETTY MUCH BUSTED.

YES... YOU'RE RIGHT.

AH, WELL...

GUESS THEY'LL NEVER SPIN AGAIN...

GLOSSARY



bekkō-ame: a traditional sweet candy

Daimon: "Great Gate"—the great gate to the Asakusa Shrine, a famous landmark in old Edo still in existence today

dōjō: a hall for martial arts training

hamayumi: a bow accompanying the better-known-as-*hakyuyumi* good-luck arrows still given out at shrine festivals today

Ittō-ryū: the sword school of Anotsu Kagehisa

kenshi: sword fighter

mon: (1) literally, "a gate," used to designate all the members that pass the front gate to a *dōjō*; (2) a small unit of money

Mutenichi-ryū: sword-fighting school led by Rin's father

yojimbo: bodyguard

ABOUT THE CREATOR

HIROAKI SAMURA was born near Tokyo in Chiba Prefecture on February 17, 1970. After finishing college, Samura submitted work to *Afternoon* magazine's new talent contest and was ushered into the ranks of professional manga creators. Setting out to create an entirely new genre, his *Mugen no Junin* ("Inhabitant of Infinity," retitled *Blade of the Immortal*) drew critical acclaim for its brilliant draftsmanship and its daring and unconventional infusion of modernist sensibilities within the *jidai-geki* (period samurai drama) form. *Blade* was awarded Japan's prestigious 1998 Media Arts Award in the manga division. Administered by Japan's Agency of Cultural Affairs, the award praised *Blade* for "its graphic depictions, the power of its artwork, and its deep exploration of complicated human characters. *Blade of the Immortal* can rightly be called a work of great ambition that at once inherits the best traditions of the 'good old days' of Japanese storytelling manga, while taking the form to new heights of maturity and accomplishment." *Blade* has drawn similar accolades in the United States, garnering both Eisner and Harvey Award nominations and winning the 2000 Eisner for Best U.S. Edition of Foreign Material.

BLADE OF THE IMMORTAL

In her quest across feudal Japan to avenge the murder of her parents, Rin has seen too much death and agony. When she befriends a young boy, she is horrified to discover that his father is one of her parents' killers. Weary of blood, Rin now wishes only an apology from the killer, a mask maker whose only desire is to keep his evil past from his son and who will take up the sword again to protect his secret. Protecting Rin, however, is the immortal samurai, Manji—but if he kills the mask maker, will Rin's young friend be drawn into the same cycle of vengeance that has scarred her own life?

DARK HORSE MANGA
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Will Eisner COMIC INDUSTRY AWARD WINNER
GRAPHIC NOVEL/MANGA

WINNER OF JAPAN'S 1998 Media Arts Award